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Calvinist Contact

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United Church wrestles with gay question

Paul De Groot

EDMONTON — United Church conferences took different, and often contrasting, directions on The Question at the end of May, when many held their annual meetings.

The Question is the ordination of homosexuals, the most divisive issue ever to face Canada's largest Protestant church.

The Alberta Conference decided to throw the matter back in the laps of congregations and presbyteries, rejecting a resolution which would have encouraged them not to present homosexual candidates for ordination.

Two weeks earlier, the British Columbia Conference had made a similar decision.

The Saskatchewan Conference strongly affirmed a statement made by the church's General Council last August. That statement, though it did not specifically endorse the ordination of homosexuals, did not place any restrictions on their ordination.

The Newfoundland Conference had announced last October that it would not ordain self-declared practising homosexuals, a position which remained intact after its May meeting.

The London Conference, known along with Hamilton as one of the most conservative conferences in the United Church, voted to ask nominees to the General Council to state where they stand on "the issues before the church."

That was a softer version of the original motion, which would have required them to state their position on the ordination of homosexuals.

The Hamilton Conference, which has had a policy of not ordaining homosexuals since 1982, took no action to change that policy.

Many delegates expressed weariness with the whole debate and last weekend's resolutions are not the last word on it. The conference will meet at least once more, in the spring of 1990, before the church's top national body, the General Council, re-opens the question in the summer of 1990.

Many United Church members have

said the General Council failed to reflect their wishes, and have attacked the decision-making structures in the church.

Confirming that, a motion suggesting a "lack of concern for the feelings and opinions of the majority of church members" by church leaders, and calling for a national study of the church's decision-making structures, was approved by the Alberta Conference on the weekend.

The conference meetings were expected to demonstrate the growing power of the Community of Concern, a large group within the United Church

See **MAJORITY** — p. 2

Thinkbit

"If suffering were to be eliminated from the experience of living, as some 20th-century minds have considered possible, far from thereby enhancing our mortal existence, it would become futile and unbearable."

From: *Conversion* by Malcolm Muggeridge

New Christian school curriculum projects to be funded

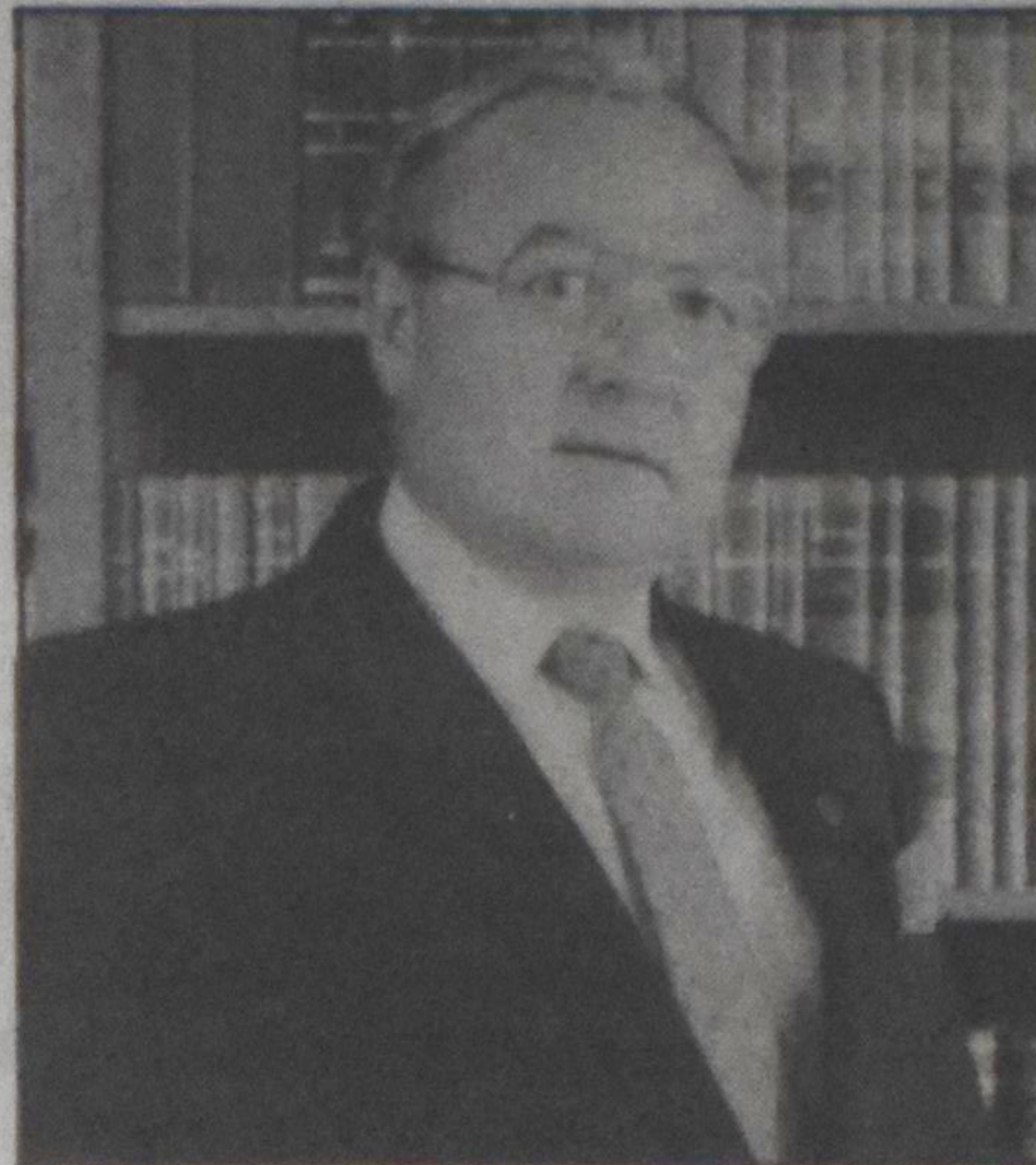


Photo: CCEF

Fred R. Vander Velde raises money for Christian school textbooks.

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — The Canadian Christian Education Foundation (CCEF) has accepted the challenge to raise \$111,000 to fund new curriculum projects to be used in Christian schools in Canada and the United States, reports Fred R. Vander Velde, executive director of CCEF.

"This is the largest single commitment of money the foundation has made in its 15-year history," says Vander Velde. Sixty thousand dollars from this new commitment will assist projects to be developed in the U.S. and the rest will assist curriculum development in Canada. Since 1975 CCEF has raised over \$610,000 for

Christian textbooks and teacher manuals aimed to serve schools which are members of Christian Schools International (CSI).

Two curriculum projects will be developed by teachers in British Columbia, for which they will receive \$7,000. There will be a French handbook and a visual arts handbook, both to be used in Grades 1-7.

Two other projects will be funded in Alberta. They will be a study unit on teaching the novel in Grades 4-9, and material on Christian perspectives on teaching social studies. These projects will receive a total of \$6,000.

A total of 11 projects, assisted by grants totalling \$38,150, will be developed in Ontario, though the schools across the country share the use of each other's curriculum materials. At the elementary level will be a unit on poetry at the level of Grade 7 and 8, and six projects to be selected from the following: geography for Grades 7 and 8, Canadian history, health at Grades 6 and 7, two units of Canadian studies for Grades 4-6, two units of social studies for Grades 1 and 2, reading at Grade 1 and a spring unit for Kindergarten. Projects at the high school level are a Grade 10 unit on the nature of science in society, a course of study in history, an outline for media studies, and material for the course on people in society.

See **NEW** — p. 3

Environmental refugees now the largest group



Photo: The World Book Encyclopedia

"Many of these refugees are to be found in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the desert creeps slowly southward."

GENEVA (REC) — People who have had to leave their homes because of environmental degradation are the largest class of refugees in the world. They number more than 10 million, according to Worldwatch Institute.

The principal cause of such damage is the decline of agricultural land through environmental deterioration. In some

cases, there is improper use, sometimes natural disasters are made worse by human activities and sometimes toxic pollution has forced people to leave.

Many of these refugees are to be found in sub-Saharan Africa, where the desert creeps slowly southward. People on the edges of the desert move constantly.

But other world-wide problems, such as deforestation and global warming, may rapidly increase the number of environmental refugees in the coming decades. Worldwatch warns that up to 50 million people are in danger of being displaced by these trends.

In this issue:

Summer reading: "The summer of the tree house" pp. 10-12
Quinte students hold "compassion" seminars p. 13
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Advice to Huron community: Don't start Christian high school . . . p. 16

Majority concerns in United Church ignored

... continued from page 1.
which opposes the ordination of homosexuals. But if the Community of Concern hoped to demonstrate its political weight in the church, it was not evident at the weekend meetings.

It failed to get a resolution through the Alberta Conference which would have been sympathetic to its aims, and did not even put up a candidate for the conference presidency.

Robert Christie, Edmonton spokesperson for the Community of Concern, said

the Community has only begun to organize, and wants to move away from a pre-occupation with the question of homosexual ordination, toward broader reform of the church.

The community also wants to avoid politicizing the church over the issue, Christie said.

"To use the political system inappropriately could be destructive. We think this is a wonderful church and we don't want to destroy it. We want to work within the structures of the church, and don't want to see it blown apart."

New Bible study curriculum completed

... continued from page 1.

A new Bible study series called "The Story of God and His People" has recently been completed. This is one of the largest funding projects that the Canadian textbook foundation and its American counterpart have ever undertaken, says Vander Velde.

CCEF contributed to this project the equivalent of \$85,000 in U.S. funds, in accord with an agreement that on such international projects the Canadian contribution will be 25 per cent of the total cost.

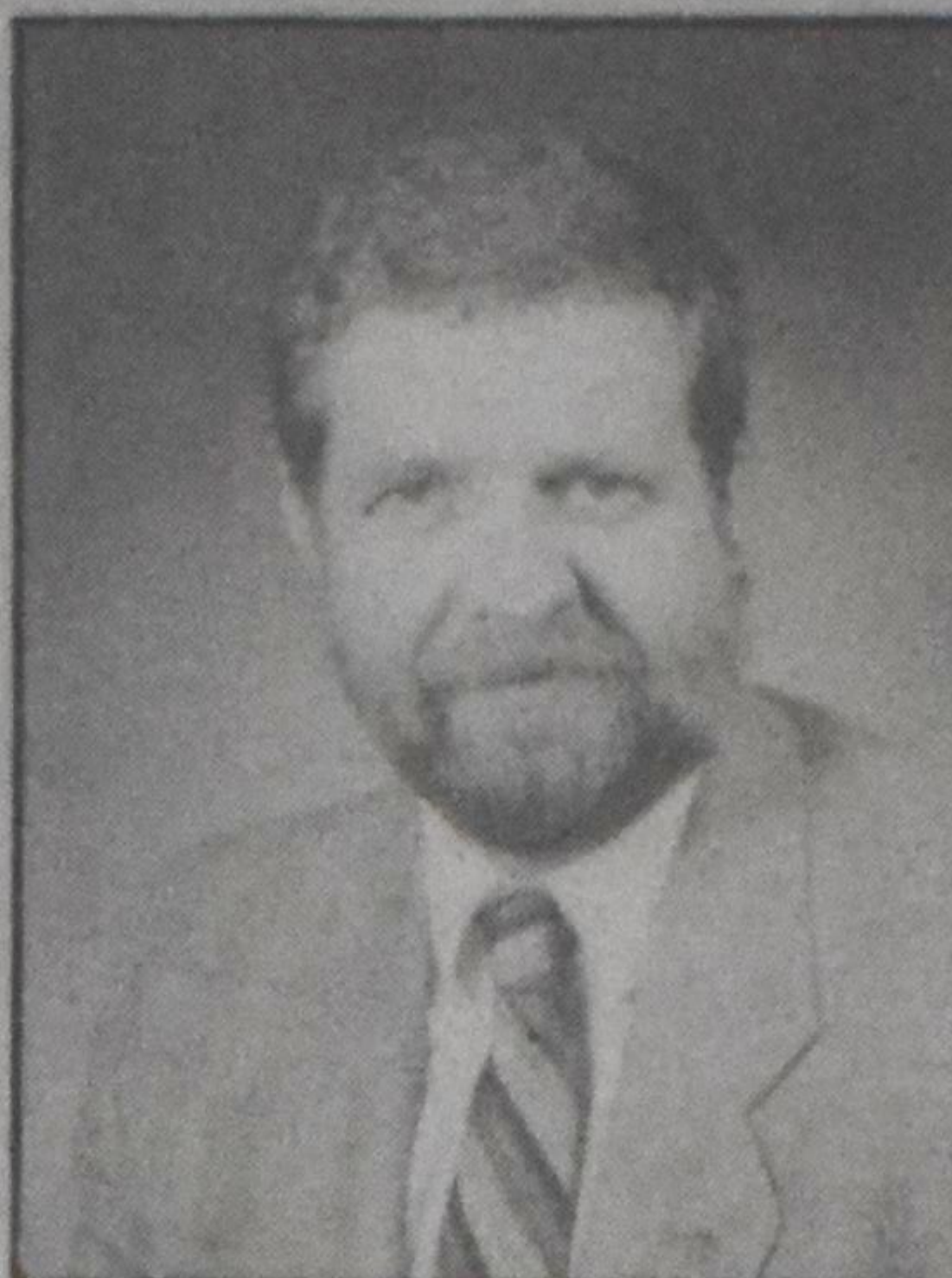
These materials are now ready for use from preschool through Grade 8, and CSI writers are now working on the curricula for Grades 9 and 10. "The materials help students gain a thorough knowledge of the story the Bible tells about God and his relationship to his people," says CSI.

The introductions to the teacher guides for this material point out that "God chose to give us his Word in the form of a story. His people have been telling and retelling this story for thousands of years. When students are immersed in this wonderful, true story, they begin to understand who they are, where they have come from, and what their lives are all about."

Starting this year the CSI Christian schools across Canada, by mutual agreement with CCEF, have been running their own fundraising programs on February 14 for these curriculum materials, rather than have them run from the central CCEF office. As part of its 15th-anniversary celebrations, CCEF plans to organize eight or nine rallies in Canada to promote Christian schools and raise money for the curriculum projects.

BETWEEN THE LINES

Socio-political comment by Syd Hielema, Clarence Joldersma, Jake Kuiken, Jim Romahn



One for the rich, one for the poor

Privatization has been a major theme in the development of public policy in Canada during much of this decade. Often attributed to the rise of "Thatcherism" in Great Britain and "Reaganism" in the U.S., Canadian politicians are increasingly promoting privatization as a norm for the '90s and beyond. Even though they have been able to avoid having their personal name identified with the ideology, many have adopted it as their very own and subscribe to it with an undoubted faith.

In very general terms, privatization refers to a process by which a variety of public or government functions and services are turned over to the private non-government and corporate sector. On a more popular level, the foundations of privatization rest on a belief that a government is best when it's the least possible — perhaps a somewhat perverse version of "small is beautiful." As currently practised by many governments, privatization is ultimately a commitment of the heart based on individualism and a concept of freedom which reduces justice to an open competition in the marketplace in which the winner takes all.

Cost efficient?

Those in favour of privatization typically espouse the cost-efficiencies to be realized by switching to a marketplace orientation. With the disappearance of red-tape, bureaucracies and labour unions, efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of public services can be expected to improve. On the other hand, opponents of privatization point to the fact that with the minor exception of a study on garbage collection, the hard evidence seems to suggest that there is absolutely no valid proof supporting the efficiency and effectiveness argument favouring privatization.

Some opponents go even further and point to a study comparing the Canadian National Railways with private sector-operated railroads. That study apparently concluded that public enterprise can be just as efficient, if not more so. Still other opponents make the point that in a number of cases, current crown corporations started life as free-enterprise organizations. But, unable to make it on their own because of private corporate managerial incompetence, many of them had to be rescued by public funds.

More recently the discussions have reached a new level. Like the sale of Air Canada some time ago, the federal government is contemplating the sale of the post office (it already has sold a large number of sub-stations) now that it has started making money for the

Canadian public. In Saskatchewan not too long ago, there was considerable anticipation that a political fight between the Conservatives and the New Democrats over the proposed sale of a profitable utility crown corporation to private interests might lead to a provincial election. Turning profitable crown corporations over to private interests seems to make sense to governments that are preoccupied with debt problems.

Shirking responsibility

In Alberta, the Conservative provincial government was an early convert to privatization. After building countless hospitals that aren't needed and acquiring all kinds of equipment that can't be used for years, the stage is now being set by the minister of health for the sale of some of these facilities to private interests.

As part of an overall strategy to reduce the cost of health services for the geriatric population, the government is prepared to ignore the evidence which strongly suggests that the best way to care for the frail and elderly is to provide them with the necessary support services in their own homes rather than institutionalizing them in ghettos for seniors. The government would apparently rather maintain its support to private firms operating long-term care institutions.

In the case of social programs, privatization is often advocated in conjunction with efforts to reduce costs. There's an interesting twist, however. With such markedly euphemistic terms as, "empowering the client" and "community enterprise," privatization is even proclaimed as a rediscovery of our corporate responsibility for mutual aid in times of personal distress. For the poor, as a result, government social assistance programs need the support of food banks in order to provide their clients with enough food. De-institutionalizing the mentally ill has become a facade, covering the growing number of homeless persons. The rationalization that the return to their families and communities where they are most likely to obtain the necessary care and support, is largely a mechanism for transferring or avoiding the costs for a frequently victimized population.

Whether it's health care, counselling, postal service or services for the mentally ill, privatization in its present form will inevitably lead us in the direction of two systems of care, one for the rich and one for the poor.

Jake Kuiken is a social worker in Calgary, Alta.

A New Creation

Renewal in Christ's Church

A report prepared for Classes Hamilton and Niagara of the Christian Reformed Church by "The Task Force for Renewal":
Rev. Jack Quartel, Chairman
Rev. Richard Stienstra
Rev. Jack Vos, Reporter
Dr. Jack Zeyl

Note: The decision to appoint this taskforce was part of the classes' consideration of the issue of CRC members participating in Koinonia-Cursillo.

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PRICES REDUCED

Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl



The military band and the ceremonial guards will move in on Parliament Hill, starting with the first day of July, and the other band which occupies the seats in the House of Commons will move out for summer recess to spread the good news of their ceaseless work on behalf of their constituents from sea to sea.

★ ★ ★ ★

Finance Minister Wilson told the House that the study report of the new federal sales tax could not be released before the summer recess, therewith saving himself at least for the summer months a lot of grief. The debate on that tax is beginning to take off like a forest fire kindled by strong winds. The tax introduces a whole new vocabulary that enriches (?) our language. Will it be hidden? Or will it be visible? Wilson shrugged his shoulders. Will there be cascading? (Tax on tax, that is) and again the minister smiled good naturedly without giving an answer.

That fiercely articulate spokesman for independent

businesses in Canada — John Bulloch — let go with a heavy verbal barrage. He called the new tax: "a national disgrace and an economic obscenity, and a nightmare for businessmen." We will be the only country in the world with a double sales tax system. The nine per cent is probably only a beginning. Taxes, like the age of people, never go down, only up. The national manufacturer's tax, which the new sales tax will replace, has risen to 13 per cent. This new tax will be the government's cash cow, ready for milking.

★ ★ ★ ★

Ontario's Liberal government is wrapped in scandal tighter than a baby in a blanket on a winter's night. No it is not sex. That plagues the Roman Catholic Church in Newfoundland. It is money. Money, together with some other goodies, was rather freely distributed after it had been channeled through a charitable foundation, headed by an enterprising lady. Premier Peterson is echoing Adam's lament: "The woman

thou hast given me." Whatever national leadership aspirations he might have had, are now doubtful and fragile like soapbells floating in the sky. Scandals tend to cling to the man in charge like a bikini to a bathing beauty.

★ ★ ★ ★

Madame Sauve received a generous raise which she undoubtedly deserved, having to attend all these strenuous receptions and things. Now, if in gratitude for this generosity she could open again the gardens of Government House, all would be forgiven and forgotten. Madame also received Israeli President Chaim Herzog, who is calling on Monsieur with the official Israeli story on the intifadah, which like all official versions anywhere probably touches the truth only peripherally.

★ ★ ★ ★

The Auditor-general has sore fingers from knocking in vain at the door of the Senate where he wants to do what he is paid for and expected to do: an audit. The members of the chamber have with senatorial steadfastness refused to surrender their books. The Province of Alberta, much to Monsieur's chagrin, is going ahead with election for the Senate. Monsieur wants no part of that, because he wants to

reward his own political cronies and not anybody else's with seats in the safe chamber.

★ ★ ★ ★

Premier Bourassa might not get enough babies to his liking in Quebec, but he must be pleased with the fact that the city of Winnipeg is considering to have bilingual street signs.

★ ★ ★ ★

There was a summit of E.E.C. countries in Madrid where among others the possibility of an integrated European monetary system was discussed. Mrs. Thatcher was about as flexible on that subject as a concrete-and-steel bridge. There must always be an England, old chap. Imagine paying for your cup of tea with foreign currency. The very idea Nevertheless, Fort Europe becomes more and more a reality that will have world-wide economic consequences.

★ ★ ★ ★

They are spilling oil all over God's creation. Exxon (note the double cross in the middle) is now laying a heavy advertising campaign on us to make us forget Valdez. Not only the blood of Abel cries to high heaven, also the vain efforts of a dying oil-soaked bird that is trying to regain flight. The President-elect of Argentina pleaded for the return of the bicycle. He's on to something, I tell you.

★ ★ ★ ★

Perestroika does not come easy to Mother Russia. Nationalism gnaws away at the unity of the republic. Bloody riots in outlying areas, nuclear submarines on fire, and members of parliament criticizing the government. Does Mikhail Gorbachev take sleeping pills? He got strokes from Iran's Rafsanjani who called him a great leader of the world. Like the editor of *The*

Banner, he had better take his strokes when they come, for, after this, they will be few and far between.

★ ★ ★ ★

The Greek political situation has taken on the qualities of a soap opera. Papandreou was asked to form a coalition, then collapsed with a heart attack. Two women rushed to his bedside, and the country is virtually without government.

★ ★ ★ ★

The Decima Research firm polled Canadians and Americans about their love for each other. Sixty-six per cent of Americans loved us so much that they can hardly wait for us to become the 51st state. Alas, it is an unrequited love: only 14 per cent of us have the same degree of affection for such union. We shall then remain what we are: kissing but distant cousins.

★ ★ ★ ★

The Christian Reformed denomination has a new editor for its magazine *The Banner*. Here is my wish for him: may he have a hard head and a soft heart, the patience of Job, the endurance of the Rock of Gibraltar, the ability to smile when he is being cursed, the willingness to forgive when he is declared beyond forgiveness. May he have a family to console him, a friend to trust and a God to lean on. All that might still not be enough to sustain him in a calling that must be the most difficult one in the ecclesiastical world bar none ... except maybe that of being professor of science at Calvin College.

Carl Tuyl is the pastor of First Christian Reformed Church in Kingston, Ont.

Ontario consumer minister introduces new bereavement legislation

TORONTO (MCCR) — Ontario Consumer Minister William Wrye introduced for first reading recently two new pieces of legislation that will "significantly strengthen and improve the funeral and cemetery services available to consumers in Ontario," says the ministry of consumer and commercial relations.

"This proposed legislation demonstrates our government's commitment to provide enhanced consumer protection as well as a more equitable marketplace," says Wrye.

The funeral directors and establishments act and the new cemeteries act were first released to the public in draft form on April 10. Since then, there has been extensive consultation with various consumer groups and cemetery and funeral services associations.

As a result of these consultations, technical changes have been made to the draft bills. In addition, the proposed ban on door-to-door and telephone solicitation of people's residences, hospitals, nursing homes, and other similar institutions, has been expanded to include work places.

The focus of the two bills is on consumer protection. The bills provide for the following:

- a requirement that fully itemized price lists on services and supplies must be made available to the public and that reasonable information must be provided over the telephone upon request;
- requirements that funeral establishments offer a basic low-cost funeral and that consumers be guaranteed the right to purchase a non-traditional funeral;
- the changing multicultural diversity of Ontario has led to licensing recognition for two categories of funeral directors — those who perform embalming and those who choose not to embalm;
- requirements that all money paid to a cemetery or funeral establishment for pre-need services be held in trust and provisions that all pre-need contracts may be cancelled, at no cost to the consumer, within 30 days of signing.

Included in the funeral directors and establishments act regulations will be the establishment of a prepaid funeral services compensation fund. The fund will reimburse consumers should they be unable to obtain funeral

services for which they previously arranged due to closure or bankruptcy of the establishment.

Regulatory effectiveness in the cemetery sector will be assured with the required licensing of all cemeteries and commercial cemetery salespersons and the appointment of a registrar to administer the new legislation.

Introduction of this legislation is one of the early results of the consumer ministry's Legislative Review Project.

"The provisions contained in these bills were developed over time through consultation with many interested parties, including consumer and industry groups. That input and recent technical changes made to the draft bills have strengthened and improved this important new legislation," said Mr. Wrye.

The regulations that will be developed in connection with these bills will also be done in consultation with interested groups said the Minister.

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Editorial

Is God’s design visible in the New Age movement?

It’s difficult sometimes to see a pattern in the things that happen around us as we enter the last decade of the 20th century. What does one make of the oppression in El Salvador, China and Romania, to mention but a few dark places on the globe? How does one interpret the easing of tension between the Eastern European bloc and the West? Is there a pattern, or was the historian right who said that history is just “one damn thing after another”?

Christians have traditionally insisted that history is the unfolding of God’s plan for the world he created. They don’t believe that world events just happen. Even if they don’t understand why events happen or what will be the outcome, they believe from what they hear God saying in scripture and in their hearts that behind the scene of activity a greater purpose is being served.

God’s servant

“And he shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev. 11:15) means that history, too, is God’s servant. “Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket” (Is. 40:15) tells us that even a nation like China, with a population of more than a billion people, is too insignificant to be able to determine the course of history.

The poet William Blake asked, “what immortal hand or eye” framed the “fearful symmetry” of a tiger. Other Christian scholars have asked this question of human history. Malcolm Muggeridge, although he was converted to Christianity late in life, was convinced already as an adolescent that “all happenings down to the tiniest gesture ... are conveying something Thus can be seen, underlying the chaos of the world and of a spectator’s own mind, God’s order As for history, billed as an interminable running soap opera, it turns out on closer inspection to be a Theatre of Fearful Symmetry” (From *Conversion: a Spiritual Journey*).

New Age strategy

Two other Christian authors have observed this order of God in history, namely, in the New Age movement. Erwin Lutzer and John F. De Vries co-authored *Satan’s “Evangelistic” Strategy for This New Age*, a book which shows that even Satan cannot escape the order of creation. In fact, the authors unearth a most fearful symmetry as they describe the way the New Age mind is attacking the Western mind, originally shaped and influenced greatly by Christianity.

The authors go back to the serpent’s lies in the Garden of Eden to show that Satan, although he may have shed a few layers of skin, has not changed his stripes at all during the ensuing centuries. Gen. 3:5 tells us that the serpent revealed a strategy for all times when he said, “[1] You will not surely die, for God knows that when you eat of it, [2] your eyes will be opened, and [3] you will be like God, [4] knowing good and evil.” These statements the authors call the four flaws, as opposed to the four spiritual laws developed by Bill Bright of Campus Crusade. Although the play on words is a little too cute for this titanic episode in Eden, the recognition of an abiding strategy is very perceptive.

“You will not surely die” is a lie that the New Age movement propogates with its doctrine of the reincarnation. Nobody really dies, but continues in another lifetime or life form. The second lie, “your eyes will be opened,” is expounded by the New Age concept of “transformation of consciousness.” Through meditation, and in some instances through drugs and sensual experiences, one can gain new dimensions of knowledge and enlightenment.

“You will be like God” is very much a New Age idea. The

mindset of pantheism believes that everything is spirit, and that one can be released from the material world and grow into the divine by psychic means. Finally, the statement of the serpent “You will know good and evil” also echoes through the ages. Nothing is basically right or wrong to the New Age person. If God is everything, then God is evil too. Hence, there are no immoral choices for those, as they participate in the divine, chose what feels good inside of them.

When I read this section in the Lutzer/De Vries book, I could hardly take it in. What a fearful symmetry, indeed. Can anything expose more dramatically the “new” thinking of our times than the link it has with the serpent’s debut in Paradise? What an enduring pattern of deception! What an ancient fabric of fabrication!

Thank God for symmetry

But don’t you find yourself comforted by the thought that even Satan is bound by rules? Nothing could be more threatening to the whole creation than the triumph of chaos. Suppose Satan had broken out of the order of creation which God laid down in the foundations of time and space; what a horrible escape that would have been. Then history would for sure have been just one damn thing after another. Then history itself would have been damned, and we with it.

But now, as we glimpse evidence of the warp and woof of creation and salvation, even in the pathetic imitations of the Prince of This World, we feel encouraged, imbued with a renewed morale. Nothing happens outside of the will of our Father in heaven. Events are moving forward to a predetermined ending and new beginning. God is in charge.

I suspect that Chinese Christians know this even better than we do now. Our television screens and our newspaper front pages suggest a situation in China that has gone beyond the rational, beyond the limits of meaning and purpose. The pictures and reports fool even Western Christians into thinking that a few octagenarians who took part in the Great March are in control in China, at least until they kick the bucket. But Chinese Christians who read Isaiah 40 know that there is a bigger bucket which no one can kick. They must be clinging to every word of prophecy found in the Old and New Testaments.

Don’t be fooled

Let’s hope that Western Christians are equally alert when it comes to Age of Aquarius kind of thinking. Did God really say? You betcha he did. Beware of New Age wolves in the sheep’s clothing of Christianity or the Western mindset. In North America and Europe it’s possible to adapt (and more and more do) what are basically Hindu tenets to a hippy or middle-class or even yuppie lifestyle.

Some even say that New Age is a higher form of consciousness than Christianity. We have moved from the sign of Pisces (the fish is a symbol of Christianity) into the sign of Aquarius, and that means the kingdom of universality is at hand. Don’t believe them. The old serpent is craftier than any wild animal the Lord God has made. But he’s full of you know what: lies.

In the meantime, in the midst of all the symmetry of good and evil, our God reigns. And because of that, we will pray from the heart all the more fervently the petition: “Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

BW



Weather patterns

Whenever a thunderstorm rolled across the Rotterdam skies of my childhood, our parents would awaken and gather us around the table to read the Bible and pray. The curtains would be tightly drawn as we listened for the thunder to abate. One night, while our parents were out, a thunderstorm broke and all of us huddled into our parents' bed. There we wailed until our parents came running in, drenched to the skin and very grateful to be safely home.

So I never knew what lightning looked like until an electric storm hit while I was shopping in downtown Hamilton with my mother. Awed by the magnificent beauty of the streaks I cried, "It's beautiful!" only to be told in shocked tones by my mother, "How can you say that? That's God's anger speaking to us!"

After living in Edmonton for 14 years I am beginning to wonder whether every snowstorm in May, hailstorm in June, tornado in July, drought in August, and deep-freeze in September is necessarily to be considered a direct act of God. Does God control the weather patterns in the immediate ways described in the Psalms, Habakkuk, Job, or are the weather patterns also a manifestation of a fallen world? Is the weather's unpredictability and occasional destruction of nature's beauty akin to the acts of rebellion in human-divine relationships?

Creator of order

A few months ago I heard an historian colleague at a faith and learning conference describe God as the Creator of order and orderliness in the cosmos. "Now the earth was formless and empty" (Gen. 1:2) and the Creator fashioned a world out of that chaotic formlessness and "saw that it was good." That was before the Fall and rebellion entered to disrupt order and beauty and relationships.

I may be naive but I see disorderliness in our cherry tree's lack of blooms because of freak summer snow. And I see chaos in the starvation of millions when droughts do not cease. And the earthquakes in Armenia are the consequences of an earth groaning rebelliously to its Creator.

I may of course be lacking in the Big Picture, which sees the importance of a snowy day in the life of Edmonton's green earth, or the need for many to die so that others may live, or the regained public responsibility for building improved housing for the homeless Armenians. But the Big Picture tends to be an after-the-fact explanation that does little to comfort the tears in the here-and-now.

In reading biblical passages pertaining to the weather, I am struck by the fact that these passages more often describe God's power in weather imagery rather than ascribing to God the total weather control. God's anger can be as fierce as a storm; his wrath can pierce like lightning; his love can move mountains. Believing that God's greatness is such that it can remove in an instant all our petty and idolatrous possessions just as a tornado can wipe away a city in an instant is different from believing that God sent a tornado to wipe away our materialism. I am inclined to believe at this point that God grieves no less than we do at the extent of the distortion from goodness and order that is inherent in all of his creation, including the weather.

There is a tendency in today's Christian circles to focus on the human's inherent godliness rather than our fallenness. Maybe we should focus similarly on the fact that the sun does shine at regular intervals, that many of us do get to eat, that more often than not, the winds blow past without harm. A world with no hope of redemption would see a return to the formless and chaos of the void — the end of time.

Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis is assistant professor of education at The King's College, Edmonton, Alta.

Christian education more necessary than ever

I am responding to Mr. Rang's editorial in the June 16 issue of C.C. It reminded me of how important Christian education is.

Every day it becomes clearer that we are living in an anti-Christian world. Movies and television teach us the "art" of violence, crime, shooting, sex, etc., creating a rotten moral climate for our children.

Little wonder that there is a growing spirit of rebellion. There is no discipline and no respect for authority. Corruption is growing rapidly in every part of our so-called free, democratic society. The secularists and humanists are trying to push Christianity out of the public sphere, especially in our public schools.

It came to my attention recently that the Toronto Board of Education has been proposing a long list of prayers to be used in public schools — readings from Mohammed, Buddha, Tolstoy and the like. Besides that, the curriculum is supporting, directly or indirectly, an evolutionist, socialist view. Abortion is treated as an acceptable form of birth control.

It is high time to realize that Christian education is paramount and Christian parents are obliged to seek this for their children. A distinctively Christian education has proven to be the only satisfying solution at a time when Christianity is losing more and more influence in our present society.

Herbert Goodhoofd, Sr.
Brampton, Ont.

Longer Letter (For more letters see page 6)

Discussion on homosexuality hardly begun

As members of AWARE, the Toronto-based group with a ministry to gays and lesbians in the Christian Reformed Church, we are truly grateful for your courage in covering the homosexual issue. You clearly saw the need to take up this challenge. You gave room for the expression of the entire range of approaches. And in every case you provided for dignified and caring treatment of a point of view.

We have no doubt that for some persons of homosexual orientation this was the first time they felt some level of acceptance in the Reformed community in Canada. Perhaps some of us even saw some possibility of future acceptance on a wider scale. Especially your second editorial, with its endorsement of unconditional acceptance, made a deep impression on us. We felt affirmed and experienced bonding with our straight brothers and sisters.

The discussion has, of course, hardly begun. We hope you will be able to support the further development of what you started. May we point out some issues — just a very few of the many that could be raised — that will show how much territory still needs to be covered before we can find each other more deeply?

A few issues

Ironically, the best of all the pieces, your second editorial, also poses one of the greatest problems. Unconditional love suggests enmity. This unconditional love needed so much stress because without it we clearly seem deserving of rejection. For us that is too easy.

Other issues come to us in your first editorial. You stress the barrenness of gay sex without children. The way you put it, why does that not apply to childless heterosexual couples? And are children the one and only fulfilment of human sexual intimacy?

In that editorial you also suggest that faithfulness or intimacy are unattainable among gays and lesbians. But many, many relationships, both of our own acquaintance and through the testimony of others, tell a very different story. As for all the failures, can you understand that when relationships which everybody desires and supports — heterosexual marriages — fail miserably in our society, it will be almost impossible to foster relationships everybody condemns and tries to destroy? There really are no data to prove that intimacy and faithfulness are inherently unattainable for mature, self-accepting gays and lesbians. Many of us have found greater self-acceptance after a long struggle, because we have accepted that God accepts us in Christ as we are. After that, we also have found

greater commitment to others in relationships.

Much work needed

Finally, there is the puzzling relationship between your *recommendation* of unconditional acceptance in your second editorial and your *rejection* of unconditional acceptance in the United Church. We believe that much work is needed here to learn to understand how the necessary acceptance of norms and the obvious need for obedience and faithfulness can go together with unconditional acceptance in the practice of the church.

Once again, we thank you very much. And we hope that your splendid start will have been the beginning of a long period of dialogue in the Reformed community. Allow us also to make known that anyone who wishes to learn more about our work can call AWARE at (416) 590-2133 or write care of MCC, 2029 Gerard St. E., Toronto, ON M4E 2B3.

Gratefully yours,

Tim and Jane
for AWARE

Response:

Let me briefly address the second part of your letter in which you raise some questions that seem to beg for a reply.

"Unconditional love suggests enmity," you said. Not necessarily. It may suggest difficulty. Unconditional love is not easily produced by anyone for anyone.

I stressed the barrenness of a homosexual relationship because it typifies that kind of relationship. Barrenness does not typify a heterosexual relationship. I was talking creational design, not exceptions to the rule.

Children are not the one and only fulfilment of human sexual intimacy, I agree. But they are an important ingredient of the purpose of sexual intercourse, which, the Christian church generally maintains, belongs only in a marriage between a man and a woman.

I agree that there are no data to prove that intimacy and faithfulness are unattainable for "mature, self-accepting gays and lesbians."

Finally, my unconditional acceptance of people must not be confused with an unconditional acceptance of lifestyles.

Editor

Knows from experience

Your editorial on the trauma of divorce was very much to the point and understanding. As a person who went through it 10 years ago, I can certainly identify. Thank you.

J. Beukens
Abbotsford, B.C.

BEYOND BELIEF



Letters / News

Widows need friendship, too

I would like to say a few words concerning an editorial in *Calvinist Contact* of May 26, 1989, headed: "Separated and divorced people need our support, too." Yes, they really do. However, I tend to disagree that "widows and widowers get so much comfort, and divorcees are generally shunned."

It's my experience that as a widow I'm very much on my own. Today's society is so very busy that there's just no time to help, advise or even chat with widows.

This brings me to another article in the same issue of *C.C.* — a feature article by Dean McRae on "The decline of friendship." I've learned that it's very difficult to make meaningful friendship in a new area, especially as a single person. It seems that couples are not able to take newcomers in if they are single, be it through divorce, death or by

choice.

Friendship stretches us

We all need friendship, as Mr. McRae says. Friendship can make us better people. It is essential to our spiritual growth and demands that we be willing to pay the price, being committed, and being able to stretch beyond our individuality, placing ourselves beside the other person and becoming more available to him or her.

We should be able to find true friendship at church. However, there too, relationships are mostly couple-oriented. Widows who are seniors are expected to visit one another, leaving no room for the younger widows still raising a family.

Articles such as mentioned above give us so much food for thought, and food for discussion in an honest, loving

manner. Oh to just have meaningful conversation that is uplifting and outreaching! The single adult needs that; yet, it's part of the loss of a partner. I could "talk" a bit longer,

but my time too is limited. Daily I reach out to others, and the need is so great. I consider it a blessing and a privilege. But at the end of a day, a lonely house awaits me, and that is

something with which widows never quite become comfortable.

A widow in southern Ontario

Solidarity is life in El Salvador

Lee Cormie

While I was in El Salvador during Holy Week this year I saw pervasive signs of suffering and death, but, miraculously, there were also many signs of new life. At the core of this triumphing of hope there is clearly the experience of a vital solidarity within the small base Christian communities, and in the links these communities have with other base communities, with other organizations and movements of the people, and internationally.

"Solidarity is life for us," insists Lutheran Bishop

Medardo Gomez, widely recognized as the heir to the prophetic mantle of Archbishop Oscar Romero. In this solidarity there are many challenges and profound inspiration for us here in Canada.

The presence of soldiers was a constant throughout my stay. They are never long out of sight, frequently stopping people, examining documents and searching vehicles. This is a chilling experience, especially at night, as I found out several times.

Another reality of this country of mostly poor people is that at least 44 per cent live in absolute poverty, unable to meet their most basic needs for food, and 46 per cent live in relative poverty, unable to cover the costs of food and other basic necessities like housing, health care and clothing. As a lay leader said during the *via crucis* on Good Friday, the Salvadorean people daily bear "the cross of hunger and illness and war."

It is in the context of this overwhelming poverty among the vast majority of the people that the ongoing repression needs to be understood. The highly privileged see anything other than passive acceptance of the status quo as a threat to their way of life. Thus, organizing to form a co-operative, to dig a well for the community, to read the Bible ... all such activities are seen as "subversive" and draw the attention of the death squads. In other words, disappearances, torture and death are a systematic part of managing society in the interests of the few.

This year the ninth anniversary of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero at the hands of the right-wing death squads fell on Good Friday. So the martyrdom of Romero, widely regarded as a saint in El Salvador, was a major theme in many celebrations of Holy Week. Like Jesus, Romero died for announcing the good news of their coming liberation to the poor. And, like Jesus, he has become a symbol of the suffering of the Salvadorean people.

Their ninth and last child

For the experience of Jesus and Romero is shared by many, many Salvadoreans today. An old man, perhaps 80, was pointed out to me at a Holy

Thursday service in a Lutheran church. He was one of those called by the congregation to lay hands on the pastoral workers who served them, starting with the bishop, Medardo Gomez. The man's wife had died recently, probably from grief, I was told, just after the death of their daughter. She was their ninth and last child to have been killed by the war ... The young man wearing a patch on his eye and another on his throat was the victim of a bombing ... and so, too, was the woman in the wheelchair, missing part of her leg.

On Easter Sunday I spent the afternoon with two lay women, pastoral workers in a large parish in San Salvador, visiting the homes of members of the base Christian communities that are the foundation of the church here. It was impossible to travel more than a few blocks without my guides pointing out a house or a street corner where someone had been abducted, or killed. Indeed, one of the chapels which serve as neighbourhood centres for the local base Christian communities prominently features pictures of three young men who were killed in a militia assault on the chapel. Overall, in this large San Salvador parish, more than 600 people had been martyred over the last 10 years.

There is literally no one among the poor and working people of El Salvador whose life has not been directly affected by this kind of loss. And this does not include all the deaths attributable to malnutrition, illness and suffering, those grim reapers of death which are the constant companions of poverty.

Death does not have the last word

Yet, amidst so much dying, the Salvadorean people affirm again and again that death does not have the last word here. Jesus' story is their story. Jesus died on the cross at the hands of the mighty for his solidarity with the poor, for announcing the good news of the coming reign of God in an unjust world. But he rose from the dead, and his Spirit lives on in the world.

Reprinted from the *ICCHRLA Newsletter*, 1989, Number 3. Lee Cormie is a professor of theology at the University of St. Michael's College, Toronto, Ont.

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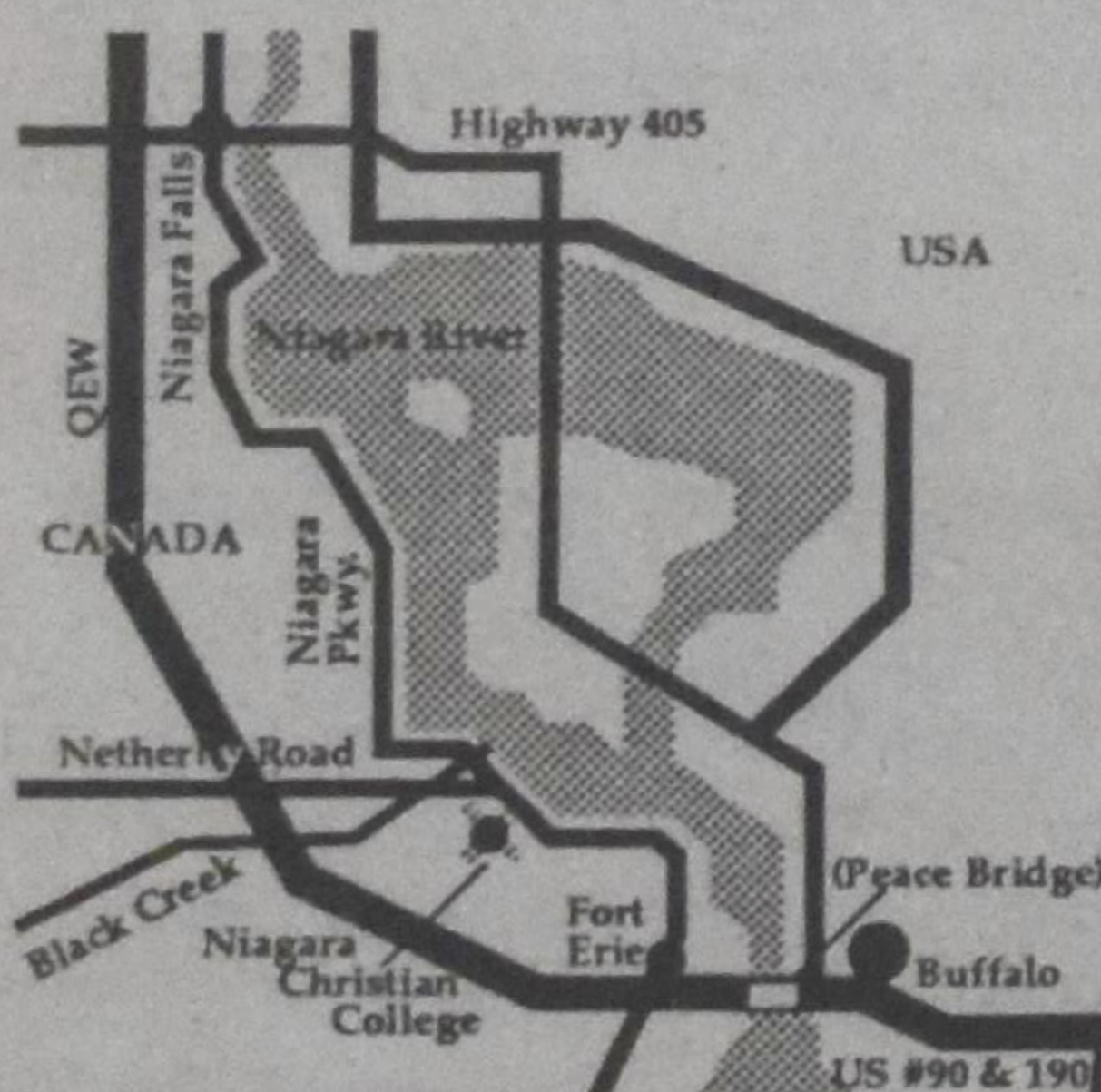
KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
Dr. Harry Fernhout,
Senior Member,
Philosophy of Education
Sunday's preacher
Dr. Cal Seerveld,
Senior Member
in Aesthetics

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday August 4, 1989

5:00 pm Registration
7:00 pm Storytelling
8:00 pm Opening of the conference
Singsong

Saturday, August 5, 1989

9:00 am Devotions and hymnsing
Plenary session: Dr. H. Fernhout
10:15 am Coffee break
10:45 am Workshops
12:30 pm Lunchtime
2:00 pm Workshops
4:00 pm Sports & games
7:30 pm Ballet Magnificat
9:00 pm Folk dancing with Norman Van Dyke
Movie

Sunday, August 6, 1989

10:15 am Hymnsing
10:30 am Worship service
Sermon: Dr. C. Seerveld and with Rev. Peter Slofstra of Jubilee CRC, St. Catharines
2:30 pm Workshops
7:00 pm Worship service
9:00 pm Songfest

Monday August 7, 1989

9:00 am Hymnsing and devotions
9:30 am Workshops
1:30 pm Plenary session: Dr. H. Fernhout
2:30 pm Closing of the conference
Departure

INTRODUCTION TO WORKSHOPS

Human beings are not born 'ready to serve.' Rather, each new generation needs to be initiated into our culture's way of life. Our children need to gain a share in our collective memory of what people in our community have come to know as important and valuable. Growing persons need to develop a sense of vision — something worth living for — to guide them into the future. Through education, which is a lifelong process, we make a concerted effort to shape the vision and memory of each successive generation.

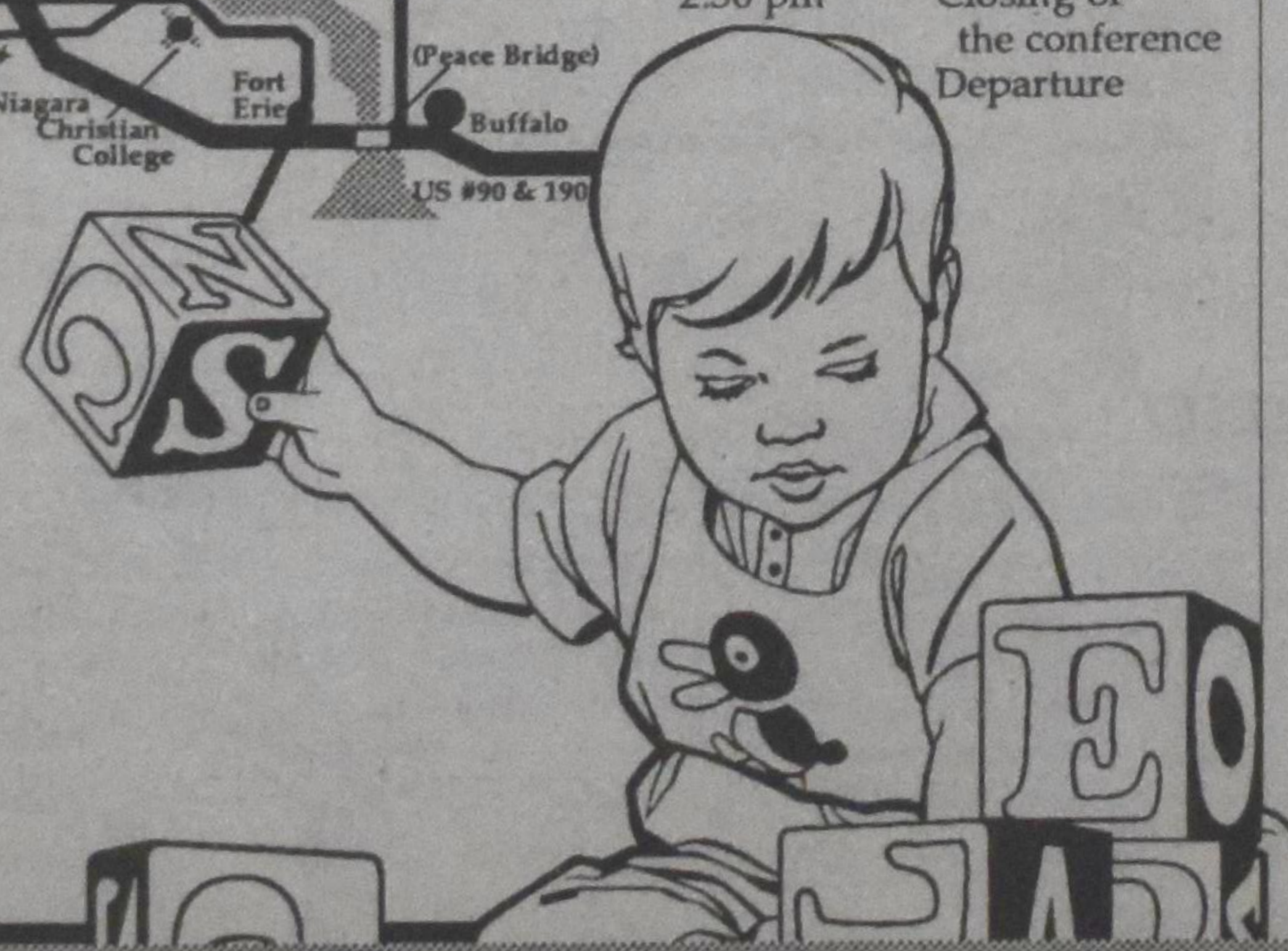
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Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til



The Adventures of Baron Munchausen

Rated PG

Stars John Neville, Eric Idle, Sarah Polley, Oliver Reed, Uma Thurman, Jonathon Pryce
Directed by Terry Gilliam

This film brings together three former members of Monty Python's Flying Circus, the British TV/movie comedy team known for its inventive brilliance and biting satirical analyses of British (and more recently, American) societal conventions and organized religion.

In this movie, director Terry Gilliam (leading his friends John Neville and Eric Idle) eases up on the satire considerably and seems to be more interested in making a tale of high adventure suitable for children and adults alike.

His tale is a play within a play. In the opening scenes we see an actor and his troupe impersonating Baron von Munchausen and his friends. In the original 18th-century stories, Munchausen was a German nobleman who had joined the Russian army and was known for greatly exaggerating his exploits — for being a grand liar.

When the "real" Munchausen (John Neville) comes by the playhouse (which, along with the rest of this sea-coast city, is being bombarded by the Turks at that very moment), he tells the actors they've got it all wrong. He then proceeds to tell the *authentic* version — which of course is far more fantastical than anything the people have ever heard. Munchausen's own tale becomes the movie's action.

Munchausen sets out in a balloon (made of ladies' pantaloons) and immediately finds out he has company — Sally, the smart and feisty 10-year-old daughter (Sarah Polley) of the play's lead actor.

Together they set out on a kind of "magical mystery tour" of the universe, looking for the baron's amazing but missing friends. One friend can run quicker than lightning; another has acute hearing and can blow up storms like the wind; a third can hit a target half-way around the world with a blowgun.

The Baron and Sally go to the moon (there are indeed wonderful visual feasts here) and through the centre of the earth; they spend some time inside a huge sea monster, and — of course — find the baron's friends and save the day against the Turks.

Adults in the audience will begin to see that, despite the pure adventure, Gilliam has a message after all: the baron, with his intensely romantic flights of fancy, eccentric lifestyle and unorthodox attitudes, puts up a fight — and wins — against the cold logic and prim conventions of the "Age of Reason."

Gilliam clearly gives three cheers for Munchausen. He also set up his "message" in such a way that viewers cannot help applying it to our own age of science and technology.

But there's something odd about the way Gilliam presents this message as if it were big news — as if it were the first time someone has reacted on film against our own materialistic age. The movie seems at least a decade too late. Many others have gotten it across, and the rise of religious cults, Satanism and New Age philosophy prove that millions have already rejected the primacy of science, technology and materialism.

The film's main flaw, however, lies with its dramatic structure. It just never lets up; it's tiring. Maybe if I were a 10-year-old seeing it I wouldn't think so; children may love this movie. (There's nothing particularly offensive in it, though it may scare very young children.) It is full of mystery, wonder and action, but it's overwhelming and never comes together into a cohesive whole. Such visual, aural and emotional overload almost makes one long for a little of the restraint of the Age of Reason.

Looking back

small talk

Alice Los



I grew up in a handsome Dutch village not far from the North Sea shore. When I returned there recently for another visit I found it had grown much bigger and more handsome yet. The rowhouse in which I was born was still sitting along the canal but now mature trees along the water's edge and new front doors and windows in each house made it look like a much better neighbourhood.

I also walked by my old school. When I was a student there it graced a sleepy corner of town. Now, cars, truck and buses zipped right by it on a busy thoroughfare. Even so, the building and yard were still much as I remembered them and I smiled. I had always liked going to school.

Later on during my visit I passed by the house where one of my classmates lived and, fondly, I remembered our graduation party. We had agreed that we would all walk each other home when it was over and, each time we came to a place where one of us lived, we had stopped and sung a song of farewell. I chuckled as I recalled how we had carried on at that very spot.

On Sundays I went to the church of my youth. I had been baptized there and 19 years later I had confessed my faith before the congregation which I knew so well. Now I watched many of my contemporaries come in and take their places in the same pews as always, and when I saw their grey hair and lined faces I knew I, too, was growing old.

Where is the next generation?

Sadly I wondered where all the young people had gone. Did nobody have a family anymore? There *were* some young children in church and

about a dozen of them brought in the plates with the broken bread for the Lord's Supper. They smiled happily. When the minister rose to hand out the bread I noticed that seven of the 10 office-bearers assisting him were women. I frowned at the imbalance and thought how perfection will always escape us here below.

Before the minister announced the death of a brother that past week, the congregation was asked to stand. It struck me as an eloquent sign of respect and sober reflection. The organ music was as I had always known it, rich and refined. After church nobody seemed to have time to chat but, in passing, several people said I looked like my mother.

Almost every day I went for a long walk. I met old friends and we compared notes. I went to the graveyard where, at the foot of a 700-year-old tower, I saw my mother's grave for the first time. I also attended a funeral with my father. He seems to go to funerals a lot these days. Hardly any of his old friends are left for him to converse with, and it made me think again how good and necessary it is to be on speaking terms with God and to have his word dwell in us richly. He'll walk with us and talk with us in just such days.

When KLM finally took me up and away again, I was conscious of my roots, but already I was scanning the horizon for the shores of Canada, the country which I have come to consider my God-given homeland.

Alice Los lives in Inkerman, Ont.

National Gallery of Canada presents a look at the human figure through Canadian prints and drawings

OTTAWA (NGC) — "Form and Figure," an exhibition of exceptional Canadian prints and drawings, will be on view at the National Gallery of Canada from June 16 to August 27, 1989. Seventy-two works, chosen entirely from the Gallery's permanent collection, will explore the period from 1880 to the late 1940s and show how artists interpreted the human figure through line and colour.

The focus of this exhibition is the human figure or the graphic representation of the human being — man, woman and child, nude or draped, active and interactive. The selection includes drawings — in monochrome and executed in graphite, charcoal and black or red chalk — as well as pastels and watercolours that through the use of colour and brush come closer to painting. The range of techniques used, particularly the varied treatments of the theme, are further expanded by the inclusion of prints. The work range from the simple sketch —

the drawing as a spontaneous expression of delightful discovery or a fleeting notation of essential lines — to the most elaborate pastels.

The exhibition represents the best works of relatively little-known artists, along with those of acknowledged master of drawings, e.g. Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Côté, Edwin Holgate, Louis Muhlstock, L.L. Fitzgerald and others.

The Gallery's Education Services have organized a series of events to accompany the exhibition. A workshop including a brief introduction

to drawing from the model, a visit of the exhibition, a drawing activity in the studio and a demonstration is scheduled on July 20 from 7-9 p.m. The cost is \$3.50 for members of the gallery and \$5.00 for non-members. For registration and further information call 990-8049. Talks will also be offered on July 4 and 20, August 3, 13 and 22 at 1 p.m. in the exhibition area.

A 48-page illustrated catalogue and a poster will accompany the exhibition.

Close to the deadline — Fax it

Calvinist Contact has recently acquired a facsimile machine. We expect that many of our columnists, advertisers and readers will make use of this quick means of sending articles, ads and other communications. Our Fax number is (416) 682-8313.

We do ask those who submit communications to preferably send typed material, or otherwise messages written in clearly legible, black print. Include such information as name of sender, address, Fax or telephone number.

Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

Abortionist convicted for infanticide

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. (EP) — An obstetrician was convicted June 13 of infanticide for allowing a fetus who was born alive after a botched abortion to die, rather than taking appropriate steps to preserve its life.

Dr. Joseph Melnick, 66, was originally accused of murder, but that was changed to

infanticide, an allowable charge under the state's abortion law. Melnick faces up to seven years in jail.

Melnick insisted the child was stillborn. His attorney, Richard Sprague, said his client was the victim of "frustration raised over the abortion issue" and said he would appeal the verdict "all the way until we get

a vindication."

Assistant District Attorney Andrea Foulkes, who prosecuted, said the Melnick case was the first criminal prosecution under the Pennsylvania Abortion Control Act, which was adopted after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down abortion prohibitions in 1973.

The law requires doctors to try to keep the fetus alive when carrying out an abortion.

Melnick claimed that he was told the woman having the abortion was in her fourth month of pregnancy though she was actually in her eighth; he said the child was stillborn. But other hospital staff members said they had detected

a heartbeat and saw the baby move and gasp. Foulkes said in her closing argument that Melnick "stalled and stalled and stalled and didn't act until the baby stopped moving."

Common Pleas Court Judge Lynne Abraham rendered her verdict after reviewing 6,000 pages of testimony.

Scripture press in China operates as usual despite current unrest

NANJING, China (EP) — The Amity Printing Press in China, a Scripture press funded largely by the American Bible Society (ABS) and run by the United Bible Society, has not been affected by the recent crackdown of the military on pro-democracy demonstrators in the last two weeks.

The press is continuing to print Bibles for Chinese Christians, despite current upheaval in the country. While the turmoil has "interrupted the daily life of many people throughout China," said Peter

MacInnis, Amity's American general manager, "[it] has not affected the city of Nanjing to any great extent."

Although the U.S. State Department asked that all American citizens leave the country as quickly as possible, MacInnis will stay. His presence is "helping to inspire and preserve a stable mood among the workers," stated a report from ABS.

The Chinese government has reportedly become increasingly hostile to foreign presence in the country, particularly

citizens of the U.S. However, "assurance has been given that there is no impending danger for Mr. MacInnis, the press workers, or visiting UBS staff," the report stated. MacInnis' wife and two children are presently vacationing in the U.S.

The Amity Foundation and the United Bible Societies wrote that they are "deeply moved by the assurance of the prayers of Christian friends around the world for the Chinese people during these distressing days."

Four million face starvation in war-torn Mozambique

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. (WV) — During the hour a typical Canadian takes for lunch, more than five people in the districts of Gile and Ile, Mozambique will starve to death.

Igreja Campos, Mozambique's vice-minister of health, reported recently that an average of 128 people die

daily in these two areas of this war- and famine-ravaged country. Fighting has prevented government and relief agencies from delivering much-needed food. Campos said hunger could kill thousands more here if food does not reach them soon.

During four days last month, World Vision airlifted 23

metric tons of food into the remote town of Gile, where 36,000 "deslocado" are camped without adequate food, clothing or medical supplies. An additional one million Mozambicans are living as refugees in neighbouring countries, forced from their homes by the war.

The agency hopes to increase its current food aid budget by \$1.6 million this year. More than four million Mozambicans — or nearly one-third of the country's 14.5 million people — will need food aid this year at an estimated cost of \$361.8 million.

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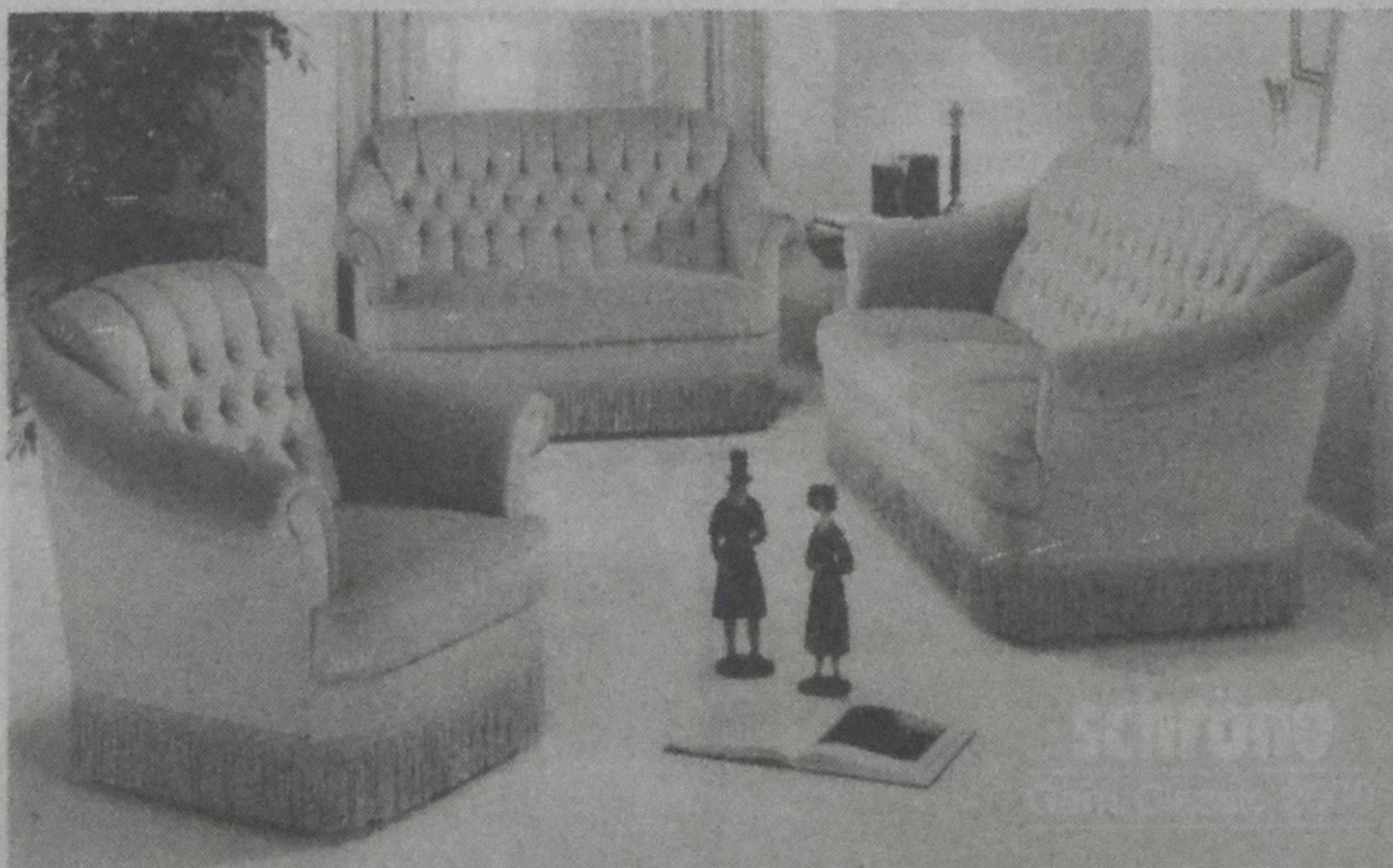
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Catholic Church looking for 'a few good men'

BOSTON, Mass. (EP) — The Roman Catholic Church is looking for a few good men. And the recruiting process for priests is going high-tech, with a slick public service spot resembling a rock video. The video debuted in Boston.

The 30-second spot features synthesizer music and quickly flashed images of luxury, including jewelry, champagne and an expensive car. Then the screen fades to black and this message appears: "A world that doesn't deny itself anything could use a few men who do." The ad closes with a shot of a priest's hands holding a communion wafer, and gives a phone number for a Catholic vocation office.

Rev. Francis LeBlanc of the

Boston archdiocese told *USA Today*, "It's harder [for men to join the priesthood today] because there are so many other influences. Society keeps telling them you measure success by how much money you make or what kind of car you drive."

The ad was produced free by a local advertising agency, and is designed to appeal to persons who "have already spent several years in fast-track careers." LeBlanc explains, "They tell us they've done it all and there has got to be more than conspicuous consumption and the rat race."

The number of Catholic priests has declined from 58,400 in 1965 to 53,500 in 1988, and is predicted to drop below 25,000 by the year 2000.

Study finds disparity between religious belief and behaviour

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. (EP) — Though nearly 80 per cent of college students surveyed just before this year's spring break said they feel religion is "very important" or "somewhat important" in their lives, only a quarter of the students polled said they disapproved of pre-marital sexual relations.

The poll, conducted by Gallup for the Christian Broadcasting Network, provided further confirmation of the disparity between claimed religious belief and actual personal behaviour. The study found that while students who say religion is important in their lives are less likely to support a liberal approach to sexual conduct, their personal behaviour doesn't match their talk.

For instance, while 92 per cent of those polled said they believed a husband and wife

should have sexual relations only with each other, half said they had been sexually intimate with more than one person; 24 per cent said they had had five or more partners.

Nearly a quarter of the students identified themselves as evangelicals, and this group expressed more conservative views on sexual issues. Of this group, 52 per cent opposed premarital sex, and 41 per cent said they were virgins.

Half of the students in the study identified themselves as Protestants. Of Protestants, 60 per cent said they do not believe premarital sex is wrong, and 51 per cent said they engage in sex "regularly" or "occasionally."



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Enraged Muslims attack church in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (NNI) — An enraged mob of Muslim fanatics attacked the only Protestant church in Pakistan's capital, tearing down newly constructed walls, setting fire to a guard's tent and destroying construction equipment.

St. Thomas Church, affiliated with the Church of Pakistan, was under construction last February when Muslims attending Juma (Friday) prayers at local mosques were whipped into a frenzy by the mullahs who had launched into a vehement harangue against Salman Rushdie, author of the controversial book, *The Satanic Verses*. The mosques

had been decorated with posters demanding "Death to Rushdie" and "Stop the construction of the church."

According to eyewitnesses, police failed to intervene immediately and allowed the mob full reign of the church property for a period of at least two hours before putting a stop to it. There is only one other church building in Islamabad, which belongs to the Roman Catholics, though the city has its fair share of mosques.

Prior to receiving permission to construct a church building, the St. Thomas Church congregation met in the residence of the local vicar, Rev. Graham Burton. Although local mullahs

attempted to stop the construction and threatened members, the Capital Development Authority granted a building permit and the cornerstone was laid in October 1986 by the Duke of Gloucester.

Burton, who was away during the attack, appealed to local authorities and called a press conference which was well-attended by the local press. But authorities have not responded and not a word of the attack has appeared in print.

In March, the church attempted to restart construction but was once again attacked by a mob, this time accompanied by police

who have notified Burton that the building permit has been rescinded. To date, police have maintained presence at the building site, ostensibly to provide protection, but whenever an attempt is made to work on the building it is immediately stopped.

Bishop Alexander Malik of the Lahore diocese asked to meet with the president, prime minister and representatives of the Home Ministry to request action on their part, but was unsuccessful. Malik then staged a protest march in Lahore in which he made the affair public and accused the authorities of interfering in the construction of the church.

In her address to Christians

at Easter, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto confirmed her government's pledge to uphold a pluralistic society and said there would be "no discrimination or prejudice on the basis of caste, colour, creed, sex or religion" She added, "... we consider the Christian community as part and parcel of the populace."

Nevertheless, whether the government will live up to its promise to safeguard the rights of minorities is still in question as long as the congregation of St. Thomas Church continues to be denied its right to have a house of worship in Islamabad.

New international Christian movement launched

WICHITA, Kan. (Renovaré) — Renovaré, Inc., founded by Richard J. Foster, has announced that it is a "new movement working for the renewal of the Church of Jesus Christ in all its multifaceted expressions." Latin meaning "to make new spiritually," Renovaré describes itself as "Christian in commitment, international in scope and ecumenical in breadth." It seeks to "combine the best from the contemplative tradition, the holiness

tradition, the charismatic tradition, the social justice tradition and the evangelical tradition."

Renovaré "seeks to articulate the heart of the Christian witness" and invites people everywhere to commit themselves to the following "covenant": "In utter dependence upon Jesus Christ as my ever-living Saviour, Teacher, Lord and Friend, I will seek continual renewal through spiritual exercises, spiritual gifts and acts of

service."

Activities of Renovaré include: national conferences in major cities; a quarterly issues paper, "Renovaré Perspective"; a retreat ministry; a small group ministry; Renovaré Covenant Fellowships; a direct-mail book service; and the use of various media including audio tapes, video tapes, film, radio and television.

The founder and president of Renovaré, Richard J. Foster, is author of *Celebration of*

Discipline and other well-known books. Dr. Foster is professor of theology and writer-in-residence at Friends University in Wichita, Kansas.

On the thirty-nine member Renovaré Board of Reference are such noted individuals as author Henri J.M. Nouwen, historian Martin Marty, pastor Lloyd John Ogilvie, Episcopal Bishop William C. Frey, seminary president David McKenna, administrator Ted W. Engstrom and evangelist

Tommy Tyson.

The Board of Trustees for Renovaré includes Edward England (Anglican), Marti Ensign (Free Methodist), Richard J. Foster (Quaker), Roger Fredrikson (American Baptist), James B. Smith (United Methodist), William Vaswig (Lutheran) and Dallas Willard (Southern Baptist). The first Renovaré National Conference will be held November 9-11, 1989, in Wichita, Kansas.

Graham Mission 89 attracts high response

LONDON, Eng., June 19 — Despite a strike which closed the subway station nearest to the stadium, the first series of Mission 89 meetings with Billy Graham closed with another near-capacity crowd at West Ham United Football Grounds in London's deprived East End.

Attendance averaged more than 20,500 each of the three nights with a total of 6,404 individuals responding publicly to Graham's invitation to make a commitment to Christ. This

response of 10.4 per cent of the audience was slightly higher than that of the Mission England meetings in 1984 and 1985, and was nearly three times the average for a crusade in the United States.

Reflecting on the high attendance and response, the Bishop of Barking, the Rt. Rev. Jim Roxburgh said, "There was a great deal of expectation in the churches that God would work through this mission. There was a lot of prayer and a lot of preparation. If it's not properly followed up, the

churches in East London will have a lot to answer for. But I have every confidence that they will not let the Lord down. They're going to go on."

A teenager attending one of the meetings addressed by Graham at West Ham Football Grounds confronted a volunteer usher with a three-foot wire-corded leather whip.

"I don't think I'll be needing this anymore," he said. "I'm going forward." A counsellor met him and helped him to a personal faith in Christ.

Reformed Ecumenical Council to assemble in Greece

GRAND RAPIDS (REC) — The 1992 assembly of the Reformed Ecumenical Council will take place in Greece, with the Greek Evangelical Church (GEC) as the host church. The interim committee of the REC made the decision during its meetings in March, and the GEC responded favourably to

the appointment.

The assembly of REC is a two-week meeting accompanied by four days of conferences. The conferences in 1992 will focus on urban mission, theological ethics and youth lifestyles. The precise venue for the 1992 meetings is still under negotiation.

Anglicans will talk to DRC

JOHANNESBURG (REC) — The Church of the Province of South Africa (Anglican) reports that its bishops have proposed conversations with the white Dutch Reformed Church. Meetings with the

DRC were stopped in 1988 after comments from the DRC about the conduct of the Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu. A restatement of those comments that was developed during the

preliminary negotiations for the Reformed Ecumenical Council consultation on race relations in March apparently prompted the bishops to re-open talks.

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Global trends show rise in Third World Christians

WHEATON, Ill. (REC) — Global trends show a dramatic rise in the percentage of evangelical Christians now living in the Third World. Seventy per cent of the world's evangelicals now live in Third World countries, Sharon Mumper writes in *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*. A decade ago, about half of all evangelicals lived in the Third World.

The major increase has come in East Asia, where church growth in China and South Korea has boosted the number of Christians by many millions. In Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, rapid

growth is also a pattern that will make these areas major centres of Protestant Christianity in the coming decade. One of the signs of this trend will be the increasing presence of Third World missionaries working in First World nations in the coming decades.

Feature

The summer of the tree house

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

It wasn't so much that he hated school, Bobby thought to himself, but rather that school seemed to hate him. At least, Parkdale Elementary School seemed to.

The high narrow desks weren't built for his stocky, robust frame, leaving his short legs dangling anchorless and his protruding stomach feeling wedged in. His desk, grouped in a square with those of three other Grade 4 students, faced away from the windows towards the bulletin board. Nothing lived, moved or breathed on that board, not like through the windows behind him where he knew birds flew and leaves, loosened from their moorings, blew in the blustery September wind.

Facing Belinda, Bobby mused moodily, "Ugh, I hate sitting across from you. I saw enough of your freckles last year to last a zillion years." He glared at her oval-shaped face. But suddenly amused, he envisioned her face as a giant dot-to-dot picture, with him drawing lines from one slightly varied freckle to the other. A small snicker escaped him before he could stop it.

Belinda looked up. "What's so funny?" she whispered curiously, yet belligerently.

Bobby's grin grew broader, his blue eyes twinkling. "Well... I was just thinking... well...." His words became garbled as a larger laugh erupted.

Mrs. Samson looked up from her desk and fixed her dark-eyed gaze on Bobby. He swallowed his laughter and tucked his joke away to be brought out when an assault on Belinda would be convenient or necessary.

And sometimes assaults were necessary.

Belinda, despite an overpopulation of freckles on her face, was very pretty, good at sports and smart. Bobby would even begrudgingly admit that. But her tongue, a harsh enemy indeed, had hurt his feelings more than once in the past

school year.

It was because of Belinda, more so than because of the desks, his bulletin board-based view and the gym classes in which he, very unathletic, never excelled, that he felt school hated him. It was not a place where he felt he belonged, and was surely not at all like being in the tree house that his dad had built for him this past summer.

This summer past had truly become for him the summer of the tree house. More than a structure of wooden posts, two-by-eights and plywood, the tree house was his castle in the sky.

For months in Grade 3, Bobby's persistent pleas for a tree house had fallen on seemingly deaf ears. Absorbed in preparatory plans for the birth of twins in June, his parents had been too busy to consider doing yet one more task. So caught up in their own joy were they, that at first they were oblivious to Bobby's lack of excitement over the imminent births.

With the month of June fast approaching, Bobby's pleas for a tree house intensified.

"Why is this tree house so important to you?" his dad asked after Bobby mentioned it once again.

Not able to clearly articulate why, Bobby still somehow knew the reason. Plenty of things had happened at school between Belinda and himself that had given rise to the need for a tree house, and for the chance to build it with his dad.

On a balmy May evening, Bobby lay crying in bed. The twins would be born in a month and he found it harder to eat and sleep.

"What's wrong, Bobby?" his dad asked as he came to pray and sing with him, then tuck him into bed.

At first no words surfaced. Then quietly he said, "Will you love me like you'll love them?"

With a bear-like hug, Bobby was embraced. "Of course, Bobby, we'll always love you," his dad said. Then

after a moment, "Why do you ask? Is something wrong?"

No answer was forthcoming.

The next morning at breakfast, a small hint was dropped. "Maybe I should pick up some lumber soon," his dad said. He winked at Bobby, who began to believe that a tree house would be built for him before he was old enough to go to college, or the army, or wherever you go when you grow up.

The promise of the tree house made the last weeks of Grade 3 bearable.

While his mother bathed the new-born twin sisters, Bobby and his dad, tools in hand, had gone to find a spot for the tree house where shade from the hot June sun would be plentiful. The walnut tree in the backyard had no lower limbs on which to place a tree house. They decided to build it on four posts on ground which had not yet been scarred by any post-hole digger, wrenching grass and soil to reach the deeper stone and clay.

To Bobby the spot seemed perfect. A spot of pregnant creative possibility it was; a place of potential womb-like security where he would post the "keep-out" and "no-girls-allowed" signs as it suited him.

Slowly, arduously they had stripped the ground of four pillars of soil and left spaces for four pillars of wood, which were fixed firmly in the ground with cement. For several days the high, buzzing sound of the skilsaw pierced the morning air as wood was cut to take its designated place in the design. Each day the tree house progressed further, till a box-like structure emerged, standing on four posts, its slanted roof punctuated by a large skylight.

As Bobby and his dad worked together, man and boy enjoying each other's company, Bobby found his earlier nagging question receding. He knew instinctively that he belonged here with Mom, Dad and the babies. Despite trouble at school, things would be all right at home.

As the summer progressed, thoughts of school and Belinda faded into the background and were gone from his conscious mind. Bobby hadn't felt this happy for a year.

★★★★

Michael, handing him the math quiz, wrenched Bobby's sun-drenched summer thoughts back to the gruelling greyness of the overcast September day. He bent his head to the task of adding and subtracting, multiplying and dividing. Belinda, busy too, seemed to turn over the quiz paper faster than he could get to the bottom of the first side. A nervous tremor rippled through his stomach.

"When you've completed your quiz, you may quietly hand it in and then be excused for recess." Mrs. Samson's soothing voice interrupted the scratch-scratch of the sharpened pencils.

Bobby intensified his concentration, but was interrupted a few moments later as Belinda stood up to leave. Mark and Susan, his other desk partners, followed her a few moments later. 184 and 275 and 305 equals Bobby slapped his pencil down in frustration so vehemently that it snapped, the sound cracking the silence of the now-empty classroom. Empty that is except for Mrs. Samson and himself. Under his breath he muttered, "Bobby, you're last again."

He rushed through the last two problems knowing the answers were probably wrong. On his way out of the room he placed the quiz on Mrs. Samson's desk, avoiding her eyes as he did so.

Belinda's voice was the first to greet him in the hall as she left the girls' washroom. Not face to face, but at his back, he heard her words attacking him, defenceless and vulnerable as he was.

"Last again, eh, Bobby? Bobby Boom, last from the room. Bobby Boom, last from the room." Belinda's words became a jingle by the time she reached the playground ahead of Bobby. He walked in the opposite direction from her, wishing all the time that he could tackle her and rub her nose in the dirt, or spit at her, or possibly take her lunch, stomp on it and flush it down the toilet, regardless of any flood it might cause. Any punishment was too good for her.

★★★★

At 3:15 Bobby left school hurriedly. With as few words as possible he answered his mom's questions about his day. She wondered inwardly at how much he had changed since starting school again. Even the twins, cooing in their infant chairs, couldn't inspire Bobby to smile. He gulped down his snack and headed for the tree house with a book in hand.

Gradually the peace of the tree house overtook him. The dappled, wavering light, filtering through the finger-leaf forms of the towering walnut, fell through the skylight on to the tree house floor; baptismal-like it fell, washing away his anger towards Belinda. It was difficult to feel hard, broken, frustrated in this place. With his back against the plywood, he began to relax and read his novel. Books were his friends, gateways to other people and places where Bobby knew he could feel at home.

Suddenly a rush of wind filled the tree



house. Bobby glanced up, surprised. He saw the angel, unruffled, sitting at the tree house entrance, as if waiting to be invited in. She startled him, but not excessively. He knew about angels. But it seemed to him that they belonged, not in his tree house, but in pictures of Bible story-books, white-winged wonders of an earlier time.

Bobby had never seen anyone or anything like this angel before. She was in the centre of a circle of intense light that drew one in as a moth to a flame. Her hands lay in her lap, small-boned, yet exuding strength as if waiting to accomplish a task. Prominent beyond all her other features were her eyes — eyes filled with knowledge that made Bobby turn away. Even as he turned, flashes of light from her eyes accompanied his turning. It seemed that the tree house would be consumed by fire. Caught in a mixture of fear and excitement, adding up to curiosity, Bobby found himself looking at the angel once again.

She got right to the point.

"There's a problem?" she asked.

Bobby nodded, but wasn't quick to reply. The angel was in no hurry. Together they sat, earth-bound boy and heavenly healer, as the moments flowed by silently. Bobby became uncomfortable. After all, hadn't he been told not to speak to strangers? But soon he realized that this was different.

"What do you want?" he asked.

"Who are you, anyway?"

The angel said, "I am Rophee."

"That's a funny name!" Bobby blurted out, then apologized when he realized how rude he sounded.

Rophee smiled. "Funny to your ears, yes, yet the name is true. I am the Healer." Then with a more serious expression she repeated her earlier question. "There's a problem?"

"Yeah, lots," Bobby replied. "It's school — Belinda, you know. She's making things tough on me again. Last year it was because I'm adopted Boy things sure were easier before we moved to this stupid town and stupid school."

The angel nodded compassionately. "It was easier at Rolling Acres School, wasn't it, Bobby?"

"Hey, how did you know about that?" Bobby asked, feeling even more startled than when he saw the angel for the first time. "Were you there too?"

"Yes!" The answer was emphatic.

"So you know how I liked it there so much?"

The angel nodded, the glow of Bobby's happier times multiplying her radiance.

Bobby's thoughts turned to the small country school, nestled within the silence of rolling hills. He had attended kindergarten through Grade 2 there. School had been like an extension of family. Everyone knew everyone else.

And Benji had been there too. His very, very, always, forever best friend. Every morning, without exception, he had saved a seat for Benji on the bus. Many important trades in hockey cards were made in the last few miles before the bus entered the school driveway. He and Benji had been inseparable, at least till Bobby moved. Even a dynamic Grade 2 friendship could not withstand the external pressures imposed by

family decisions.

Bobby wasn't sure why his parents had decided to move. Something about his dad needing a change. He often looked sad and tired when he came in from the barn. After talking a lot, his parents decided to move to the city nearby where his dad started work as a mechanic in a garage. Since Parkdale Elementary School was only a few blocks away from their new house, naturally it was to be Bobby's school.

Rophee interrupted his thoughts. "So Belinda wanted to know why you were given away as a baby, did she?"

Bobby winced. He'd rather not be reminded of that incident, but Rophee had conjured up the disturbing images of Belinda's contempt for him.

That had not been a good day at school. Students' work for the class project, "Why I am special," had been displayed for a week in the hall outside the classroom. His had boldly stated, "I am special because I'm adopted. My mom and dad love me." Beside those words was a picture of his dad, with his angular face beaming. He was embracing Bobby the day he arrived, not bloodied and wrinkled after the usual contractions, labour and delivery, but already washed and dressed in a navy sleeper. Made-to-order, as his mom always lovingly said. Beside his dad, his mom stood looking on, her blue eyes practically flashing contentment and pride.

Belinda had not minced words after seeing Bobby's project. "If you're so special, why did your real mom give you away in the first place?"

Her words stunned him. Of course he had thought about being adopted. And when he got mad at his mom or dad he dreamed that his other mother was a beautiful princess who had a castle filled with all the best toys in the world. There were rooms of Lego, Construx, electric train sets, and a special room for Zeddy, his favourite Teddy bear. Everything was his and he never had to clean up his toys. And that princess-mother could never be mean to him. But she was only a girl princess when he was born; a child having a child. That's how Mom and Dad had explained it. His being given up for adoption had nothing to do with whether or not he was special.

But a seed, the first one, so tiny as to be barely visible, had been planted and taken root in his thoughts. A weed-seed of doubt, ruinous and evil.

Rophee leaned over and touched Bobby's chest, bringing him back to the present. Heat, like fire, shot through him, wrenching something loose from inside of him. When Rophee pulled her hand away, in her palm lay a seed. She blew it out of the tree house as one would blow a kiss.

"Is that all?" Rophee asked.

"You know there's more," Bobby said, accepting the angel's knowledge of his life.

She nodded, "Go on."

"There was the time I told the class we were going to have the twins."

"Yes, that was rough, wasn't it?" Rophee said.

With those words, Bobby felt he had been known by the angel forever.

A second seed, a more destructive weed, had been planted that day, the day of his big announcement.

"Gradually the peace of the tree house overtook him."



Mr. Cobbin, the Grade 3 teacher had set aside a time each week called "What's New in Your Life," during which students could share special events. Bobby could hardly wait to share his news that first week in December. In his impatience, he wriggled constantly while the others shared their trivial stories. After Marlo announced, "My cat had kittens," and Justin proclaimed, "The neighbours are divorcing," Bobby, not his usual reticent self, could no longer contain his exuberance. His hand pumped up and down in the air till Mr. Cobbin said, "Yes, Bobby, there's something you want to say."

"My mom is having twins in June," he pronounced, feeling that his news was earth-shaking, worthy of everyone's attention.

Numerous miscarriages had stretched the years out, barren, in his parents' marriage till all hope for a natural-born child was depleted. But just last night his mother had announced, a tell-tale tremor in her voice, "We're going to have babies, twins, in June." Bobby looked at her, incredulous, not daring to believe he would no longer be the only child.

Everyone congratulated Bobby after his announcement. Everyone, that is, except Belinda. She whispered to Mark, loud enough for Bobby to hear, "Now that they're having their own, they probably won't want Bobby anymore. Who would, anyway?" She giggled. Bobby cringed, the second weed-seed turning excitement to fear.

For a second time, Bobby felt

Rophee's touch against his chest, bringing him forward in time to the present. Again the power in her small-boned hand tore something free from him. His heart pounded rapidly, convincing him it would burst. When she pulled her hand away, another seed, pitch-black and more ominous-looking than the first, lay in her palm. She didn't blow this one from her hand into the wind, as if that would pose too great a danger. Instead she made a fist around it. With her pulsating veins declaring war, her hand consumed the seed, sinister and destructive thing that it was. When she opened her fist the seed was gone. In its place a red, raw, gaping wound lay exposed.

Bobby, feeling confused, stared at Rophee's hand in horror.

As quickly as she had come, she was gone.

"Bobby! Supper!" his dad shouted from the house. His voice sounded clearer as he approached the tree house. As he stood beneath it he said, "We've been calling, but you didn't seem to hear."

"I've been thinking. Guess I was far away," Bobby said.

"Come on down for supper. It's your favourite — spaghetti and, for dessert, angel-food cake."

Bobby laughed, loud and clear, feeling wholly healed and filled with happiness. Once on the ground, he danced and skipped his way to the house.

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Continued on page 12 ...

The summer of the tree house

... continued from page 11.

★★★★
But at school the next day, any joy, excitement or healing he'd felt in the tree house as a result of Rophee's visit evaporated quickly.

Belinda, huddled together with a group of her followers, was talking avidly till she saw Bobby approaching. Instantly she was silent, and stuck something pink into the left pocket of her jeans.

"Something's going on," Bobby thought uncomfortably, "and it's about me." His knees felt weak.

Michael, standing taller than the others, looked awkward and guilty when he saw Bobby approaching. Pulling himself beyond the sphere of Belinda's influence, he walked over to Bobby and said "hi," trying to cover the embarrassed look on his face by being casual and friendly. But a warm red glow spread over his fine features rendering his attempts futile. His usually-calm, hazel eyes were disturbed.

The bell rang. School began. Belinda, walking ahead of Bobby and Michael, reached into her pocket and pulled out the pink paper. As she entered the room, she dropped it into the garbage can by the door.

As the morning passed, Bobby's curiosity intensified. The pink paper ... the pink paper ... what could be on it? Belinda's face gave no clues.

The ringing bell jarred his thoughts. Recess time. "Now's my chance," he thought. Pushing past two boys talking

in the aisle, he reached the garbage can as quickly as possible. The pink wadded paper, threatening and enticing, lay on top of a half-eaten apple and an empty pop can.

"Got it!" Bobby thought. But as he swung around, it was torn from his grasp. He saw Michael running from the room, shredding the paper as he went. Bobby was too stunned to pursue him.

Anxiety consumed Bobby during recess. Michael was nowhere to be found. The other children seemed oblivious to his confusion.

It was Mark who shed light on the mystery — Mark who couldn't keep a secret if he were paid.

"It really must be an ugly tree house you've got if it's the way Belinda drew it," Mark blurted out as they returned to their desks after recess.

"So that's what the joke was," Bobby said. Belinda was making fun of his tree house. Trust her to take something he had shared with the class last week and turn it into a joke. Anger rose in his chest, then constricted his throat.

Mark, oblivious to anything but his own voice, rambled on. "She drew it looking all plump and on short, fat legs like" The word "yours" got caught in his throat when he saw the look on Bobby's face.

At that moment Michael came into the room and sat at his desk.

Bobby's anger increased as he thought of Belinda's drawing of his tree



house. He screamed at her inwardly. Not just a tree house to him, it was something that, through being built, had reassured him of his place in his family. It was his sanctuary, where being Bobby was all he needed to be, where he was in charge.

Then an arrow of surprise shot through his anger, slowly dispelling it as he realized that Michael had grabbed the paper away from him and torn it so his feelings would not be hurt. And Michael had also walked away from Belinda's group, showing he wanted no part in her cruelty. Though Michael had handed the math quiz to him yesterday, Bobby had never seen him, not really seen him, before.

Bobby's focus changed. From Belinda, pretty yet ugly in her cruelty, he turned to Michael. A soft, warm feeling enveloped him.

Bobby stared at Michael's back as if willing him to turn around so that he could offer thanks, in whatever small way. The blues and greens of Michael's plaid shirt blurred and melded into a landscape of lush colours as Bobby stared at them. Sky-blue and leaf-green were there, the colours surrounding his tree house world.

Then suddenly again, but this time silently, Rophee was there, on that lush blue-green landscape. Bobby glanced around to see if anyone else noticed her. No one seemed to.

Rophee smiled at Bobby as she threw handfuls of seeds skyward. Not black, evil or dangerous, these seeds were green and bursting with life. As Rophee threw them into the air, they exploded into flowers and blossoms mid-flight. Each time she opened her hand to release more seeds, Bobby saw the wound on her palm. It had not begun to heal.

Rophee slowly faded away. "Goodbye," Bobby whispered. "Goodbye, Rophee!" He saw her shaking her head as her words reached him from a distance. "I am no longer Rophee," she said. "Then who?" Bobby cried, eager to know why his friend's name had changed.

"Now I am Chalal Rophee," she said.

"What does it mean?" Bobby demanded.

"In your language, 'Wounded Healer.'"

Chalal Rophee turned her wounded hand directly towards Bobby. He saw the wound in its ultimate ugliness, the angel's hand bitterly broken by its mark.

Bobby gagged.

At the same time a flicker of understanding flashed through his mind. Rophee, no, Chalal Rophee, had paid a price for visiting him and for wrenching free from him his terrible doubts. But the price had not diminished her.

In that moment, Bobby formed a resolve. The "keep-out" sign posted by the tree house entrance would have to be removed. Michael would be his first guest from school.

The warmth and security of the summer of the tree house permeated Bobby's being. Just possibly, with Michael for a friend, it would last into the winter and spring of Grade 4.

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema lives in St. Catharines. She dedicates this story to her husband, Rinke, who built a tree house for their four children in the summer of '88.

Message to all C.C. subscribers!!

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Education

"Compassion Seminars" for students open the window to human needs



Photo: Quinte Christian High School
Quinte students enjoy and learn from "The Poverty Game."

Robert VanderVennen

BELLEVILLE, Ont. — "I learned that if you want to help a starving prostitute it is important to listen, not talk. You have to know how to use discernment. You have to allow for cultural differences. You have to meet the immediate need, and you have to build trust — such people like honesty, not sympathy."

This was among the insights Leanne Chard gained from the two-day intensive "Compassion Seminars" held during Education Week at Quinte Christian High School in Belleville. The seminars, which took the place of all classes for the two days, included speeches, seminars with people working in the front lines of community service, and field trips to a prison, a food bank, a home for "hurting young women," a home for developmentally handicapped children and a sheltered workshop for disabled and handicapped adults.

The students in this very small high school had first-hand experiences that the

curriculum could not provide. Some comments by students follow:

"I don't remember being in contact before with someone who was deaf," said Monica Westerhof. "I liked that seminar the best."

"The first seminar I went to was led by a blind speaker from the Canadian National Institute for the Blind," reported Julia Prinzen. "In Grade 12 he was in a car accident and he is blind from that accident." Julia said that he talked about how we can assist blind people, and especially about how they help themselves, partly through special electronic devices and braille writing and reading.

"Judge Kent Kirkland spoke of his interesting duties as a family court judge," said Bonnie Steinginga. "Family court deals only with offenders from the ages of 7 to 17. Judge Kirkland talked for quite a while about punishments which he must decide and give. He said that he usually makes the offenders do community service work, and if a fine is involved, he will direct the

offender to give the money to a charity of his choice."

Teresa Hoogstad reported on a field trip to Plainfield Children's Home. She said, "This is a home not just for children but for those older that are handicapped. In this building there are 43 people between the ages of nine and 35. The home is helping these people as much as possible, motivated by serving a need, not pity. This home really made me think of all the problems in the lives of these people and how much they depend on others."

"The Poverty Game" opens eyes

One of the options for the students was a five-hour board game, "The Poverty Game," which brought to the players the experience of living on social assistance. Cyndi DeVries said, "This game was superb. I really enjoyed it. It opened our eyes to the real world. We are sometimes blinded by what is going on."

"It really made us experience the realities of the poverty some women live in," added Dvorjac

Riemersma.

A special treat on Friday morning was a concert by "Liberation '89," a group of six young black Africans from five different nations in Africa. Sponsored by Youth For Christ International, the musicians tell the story of Africa as it is today and of God at work among African young people. Cyndi DeVries says, "They were a fantastic group. It really got the whole school going. They were excellent singers. It was good to hear that there are good things going on in Africa — we often hear of so many bad things going on there."

Other seminars at the school were given by people from Quinte United Immigrant Services, the New Life Girls Home, a chaplain from Corrections Canada, an AIDS counsellor, the Christian Labour Association of Canada, hospice and palliative care agencies, M2W2 prisoner counselling, literacy services, Three Oaks Foundation for abused women and Citizens for Public Justice.

The two days of seminars were framed at the beginning and the end by keynote addresses by Marlene deGroot of Citizens for Public Justice, who brought biblical texts and principles related to compassion as a source of guidelines for relief work. She identified the difference between "feeling sorry for" and "feeling sorry with," and showed how Mosaic economic laws and similar texts elsewhere in the Bible will lead to a fuller concept of respectful, long-term compassion.

Positive student response

Student response to the two days of special seminars was strongly positive, says Mike Hoyer, vice-principal. In summing up her experience Leina Veltman said, "What

struck me most was coming to the realization of all the compassion that is needed in my community. It just broke my heart to hear about all those young people so desperately in need of a friend, those infected with HIV and all those many people who are illiterate. It made me look at all that I really have, and I kind of felt really bad that sometimes I'm always wanting more."

Cyndi DeVries added, "The Compassion Seminars shed new light on our Christian perspective. I really enjoyed the seminars. It is very important that we get more involved with our community. People need our help and it is necessary that we respond to our Christian calling."

These insights are exactly what the seminars were all about, according to Peter Van Huizen, Quinte's principal. He points out that "education for service" is the central theme for the Christian school. "Christians confess that our lives are not our own but belong to Jesus Christ, whom we serve through serving others. We attempt to make this confession concrete in all the activities the school promotes."

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Canadian student at Calvin College wins academic-athletic honours



Photo: Calvin College
Laurie Hiemstra wins academic-athletic All-American award.

Robert VanderVennen

SCARBOROUGH, Ont. — Laurie Hiemstra, a third-year student at Calvin College, was recently selected as a first-team Academic All-American shortstop in women's softball.

The award is given on the basis of strong academic work and superior athletic achievement. She is the first Calvin student in any sport to receive the Academic All-American award.

Hiemstra, whose home is in Scarborough, is a biology major with a 3.58 grade point average, out of a possible 4.00. She is a pre-medical student who has been on the dean's list for each of her six semesters in recognition of high grades, and has received the Faculty Honors Scholarship at Calvin.

"I'm really happy to receive this award," Hiemstra said. "Academics have always been more important to me than

sports. Studies come first — that's why I went to Calvin."

But consider that in her 12 league games this year Hiemstra batted .632, and led the league in hits, home runs, runs batted in, doubles and total bases as well as in batting average. In three years of play she holds eight of the 17 league records for hitting. She was chosen to the league all-star team for the third year, and this year was the unanimous choice by league coaches as the most valuable player in the league.

Hiemstra says that balancing a busy softball schedule with a rugged slate of biology and pre-med courses is often difficult. "Softball often doesn't leave a lot of time for studying," she says, "especially this year when

exams and regional competition came at the same time. You need a lot of self-discipline, but I know that if I want to get into medical school, I'd better have the discipline to study when I have to." Hiemstra also works at Calvin as a student trainer in the athletic department.

(From a report filed by Phil de Haan.)

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Dear P and M:

I am 25 years old and engaged to be married. However, I've been putting off setting the marriage date because of a big problem which I don't know how to deal with.

Seven years ago I had a baby out of wedlock which I gave up for adoption. Only my mother and my very best girlfriend know about this. Even the father of the baby doesn't know that I was carrying his child. It was just one of those "happenings" and the last thing I wanted was to marry him or to be more involved with him.

As soon as I knew I was pregnant my mother helped me to make plans to go to a maternity home out of our province. The adoption was arranged through them. I didn't dare to tell my father about my pregnancy as he is a very rigid, unbending and unforgiving man. He's very active in church work and he's always boasting about how good my younger brother and I are as we stick to his rules. But he doesn't know that we often snuck around behind his back. I now know how God punished me for being sneaky by making me pregnant. I have learned a big lesson, but it was a horrible lesson to learn. I believe that God has forgiven me and I want to start a new life, though it is hard.

I love Tom, my fiancé, very much. He is two years older than I am and anxious to get married. He is a Christian and has very high standards. I want to tell him about the baby which I had and gave up, but I'm so scared to lose him because he may not understand. I'll feel like a cheat again if I don't tell him. Please advise me about the right thing to do.

Jennifer

Dear Scared to Lose Him:

Wherever did you get the idea that God punished you by making you pregnant? You had a child because you were sexually active; that's a possible consequence within God's creational laws. The Lord does not punish people by giving them babies!

All this secrecy has kept you from dealing with the loss of your child. No one has helped you through your guilt and your grief. Before you marry, someone should!

You want to start a new life. By withholding vital information from your fiancé you are already following your family's patterns. That's the old way.

In considering marriage don't settle for less than a best friend who will accept you as you are. Why marry someone from whom you will have to keep secrets? Give your fiancé the opportunity to come to terms with your past. This may free him to come off the Pedestal of High Standards and open some doors of his past to you.

You may discover that he doesn't have what it takes to be your friend for life. Or you may discover the wonder of total honesty and mutual acceptance with him. Either way, the truth will have set you free.

No more conspiracies. May Christ give you the courage to break the silence and build a new life with the family you hope to start.

Dear P and M:

I am 13 years old and have two younger sisters. Emmy is 11 and Dorothy is nine (not

real names). It's Dorothy I can't stand.

My mom is always comparing me to her which isn't fair because she's smarter and much prettier. My mom says that I'm the rebel in the home. The truth is that Dorothy often blames me for things she has done and my parents believe her, not me. I know that she isn't as good as she pretends to be. She is sneaky and a smooth talker.

I feel that I am starting to hate her and I know that is bad. I just wish that my parents would treat us the same and see us for who we really are. But it seems that they go by looks and grades.

It's bad enough to be ugly and stupid but to always be blamed for everything and put down is worse.

I don't know why I'm writing you. I'm sure you can't help me.

Dear Older Sister:

For starters, you're not stupid. Your letter shows us that you can put your thoughts together well. You know what you feel, you know how to express those feelings and you're smart enough to reach out for help. There are lots of grown-ups who can't do what you've done.

Your situation reminded us of Jacob, who spoiled Joseph. What a mistake! Think of the grief resulting from his favouritism!

We understand that you resent Dorothy. Your anger is justified. Your parents need to appreciate you for who you really are. Right now they don't.

Can you talk out your feelings to someone in your family or community? How do you relate to your dad? Can you talk to him? Otherwise talk to a special aunt or uncle or even one of your grandparents. A school guidance counsellor or teacher can be a good listener, too.

Consider giving this column to your parents. Tell them that you're the writer. When they discover how you see yourself they will probably be upset with themselves and want to make some changes. God did something wonderful with a bad situation in Jacob's family. He can do it in yours, too!

You wish that your parents would treat all of you the same. But that's exactly the problem. What you really want is to be treated *equally*. Since all three sisters are different ages and have different personalities, each one of you deserves to be loved individually. It's just not fair to compare a teenager to a nine-year-old. Then you'll always look like a rebel.

By the way, we don't believe that you're ugly, either. Part of being 13 is worrying about your looks. It's a self-conscious stage in your life. Ride it out with this reminder that comes from a poster we've seen: "I know I'm good 'cause God doesn't make junk!"

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of: Sam Da Silva, Ineke Brower-Parlevliet, Tom Zeyl, Willy Suk-Kleer, Bert Witvoet.

Canada — Netherlands still negotiating social security agreement

Stan de Jong

ST. CATHARINES — Dutch immigrants living in Canada saw some pie-in-the-sky benefits disappear over the horizon when it became evident that the Dutch parliament had not approved the "Agreement on Social Security between Canada and the Netherlands" (see lead story in C.C., Apr. 21/89).

It appears now that the issue may not be as dead as was thought.

The agreement, which was to extend old age benefits under the Dutch law called *Algemene Ouderdomswet* (AOW) to certain immigrants, was signed by the Dutch and Canadian ministers on February 26, 1987. Canada subsequently completed its legal side of the bargain, but the Dutch parliament balked, insisting that certain provisions be amended.

Henry Kreeft, a Sarnia-based chartered accountant, shared with *Calvinist Contact* some correspondence he has had with Ken James, MP for Sarnia-Lambton and parliamentary secretary to the federal labour minister. James provided Kreeft with a copy of remarks made on the matter by Perrin Beatty, Minister of National Health and Welfare.

Beatty says he and his colleagues are doing everything in their power to salvage as much as possible from the original agreement and to speedily complete negotiations with the Dutch.

Beatty writes: "Despite our best efforts to influence the outcome, the Dutch Parliament has made its position very clear regarding

the agreements with Canada and the United States. Naturally, the Government of Canada is very disappointed with this turn of events. In reviewing the alternatives, we are concerned by the fact that not to pursue even an amended agreement at this time with the Netherlands would disadvantage thousands of post-1957 immigrants in Canada who may need an agreement to qualify for benefits or increase the amount of benefit already payable. For this reason, we are committed to having an agreement come into force as quickly as possible, even though it is less generous than what had originally been negotiated. Health and Welfare officials have already entered into discussions with Dutch officials to modify the Agreement. I can assure you that everything possible will be done to ensure that the greatest number of people benefit from this Agreement and that the process is expeditious."

The Dutch parliament has clearly asserted its decision that either the agreement is to be modified by explicitly stating that a person must have been insured under the General Old Age Pensions Act in order to have periods of residence in the Netherlands prior to January 1, 1957, taken into account in the calculation of the old age pension or there will be no agreement. Such an amendment would mean that persons who emigrated from the Netherlands to Canada prior to January 1, 1957, will not be entitled to receive Dutch old age pensions in Canada.

New York is Corinth by the Hudson, says Christian Jew

Bert Witvoet

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — According to Harold Sevenser, president of Chosen People Ministries, New York is "a great clearing-house of news, culture and ideas that can spread the gospel in all directions simply because of the millions that travel through it and return to their home cities and towns."

Sevenser also believes that New York is the greatest Jewish mission field in the world. There are more Jewish people living in New York than in all of the Soviet Union, he says. The greater New York metropolitan area boasts a population of 1,778,000 Jews.

The total population of Jews living in Israel is 3,562,500. This means that the Jewish

population in New York is 50 per cent of Israel's entire Jewish population.

In New York, Jewish Christians are free to present the gospel to the Jewish people, says Sevenser, without restrictions or government interferences. That is not the case in Israel where government regulations restrict the spreading of the Christian faith.

Agencies like The Chosen People Ministries make good use of this freedom to evangelize Jews in New York. And by doing so, they also reach Jews who are visiting New York from other parts of the world. It is this situation that made Sevenser say that New York is Corinth by the Hudson.



Pensive Dutchie

Syrt Wolters

What constitutes 'radical discipleship'?

Our editor was right when he concluded his second editorial of May 19, 1989, about the direction for Calvinist Contact, with, "I have given Syrt enough material for three more columns." You sure have, Bert.

Here, then, is the first. I won't argue further about being "broadly Reformed." I gladly endorse the editor's statement: "We are called to discern the spirits of our time and to test them by biblical norms." To this I add my genuine "Amen."

He continues: "... We want to address Canadian issues in language understandable to English-speaking Canadians, the way Paul wanted to be a Greek to the Greeks." Again I say, "Amen."

But what are biblical norms, and on whose terms are we going to be a Canadian to the Canadians? Indeed, Paul was a Roman to the Romans and a Greek to the Greeks. But never on the terms of the Romans or the Greeks. He was a Roman to the Romans and a Greek to the Greeks on the terms of the gospel of Jesus Christ only. In that respect

Paul was a radical disciple of Jesus Christ.

The editor thinks that I believe that radical discipleship is determined by ideological and philosophical faithfulness. He has misunderstood what I wrote. I would rather go on record as one who believes that radical discipleship is a way of life which is in harmony with the constitutional law of the Kingdom of God: love God above all and love your neighbour as yourself.

We should keep that law of love before us whenever we must make a choice or make a decision. How all-encompassing this law is, is reflected in Jesus' summary of that law of love: love God with *all* your heart, and with *all* your mind, and with *all* your strength. It is as if we hear him say: this commandment to love requires and demands every fibre of your existence. No matter in what situation we find ourselves, that law of love should be your guide.

Radical discipleship is not first a matter of ideological or philosophical theory, which can be learned or memorized or recited in church or in

catechism class. Radical discipleship is to be done on a daily basis in every situation in which we find ourselves.

We are only confusing the issue by referring to Mother Theresa or others who do perform a heroic task by being radical disciples in each of their situations. Does the faithfulness of these heroes of faith diminish one iota of our responsibility when we are called to be a radical disciple in our situation? If we mirror ourselves to someone else, we always can find an excuse for our particular behaviour. The only mirror we may use is the mirror of God's law.

By repeatedly referring to the Law of God I've sometimes been accused of being legalistic, as if the Christian life is a list of do's and don'ts. Let's never forget that the Ten Commandments is just that: A list of do's and don'ts. I like to look at the Law of God as an expression of the immense love of God toward man: he made us free from the slavery of sin. In order to remain free from that slavery of sin, he gave us his law: A recipe — no, THE recipe for a happy life. But we

must take his recipe seriously. We cannot pay lip-service to his law. We cannot interpret his law as if we must only adhere to this law if circumstances permit! Following Jesus is no easy assignment. It means taking up his cross after him. Are we prepared to do so? Or are we willing to accept only the benefits of his redeeming work on the cross, but are not prepared to take up that cross to the extent that we will be ridiculed, hated, slandered, persecuted and even killed for the sake of our Lord and Saviour?

Paul gives a clear warning in Romans 12:1 when he admonishes us: Do not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, to know and to do the will of God!

I still believe that Dietrich Bonhoeffer was right when he said that being a Christian leaves no room for expediency.

Next time I hope to be more specific about being radical disciples of Jesus Christ when it comes to educating our children. In following columns

I'd like to focus on radical discipleship when it comes to social relations, politics and perhaps some other aspects of the Christian's life.

Syrt Wolters is a semi-retired barber from Victoria, B.C.

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19*

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Don't start Christian high school now, says consultant

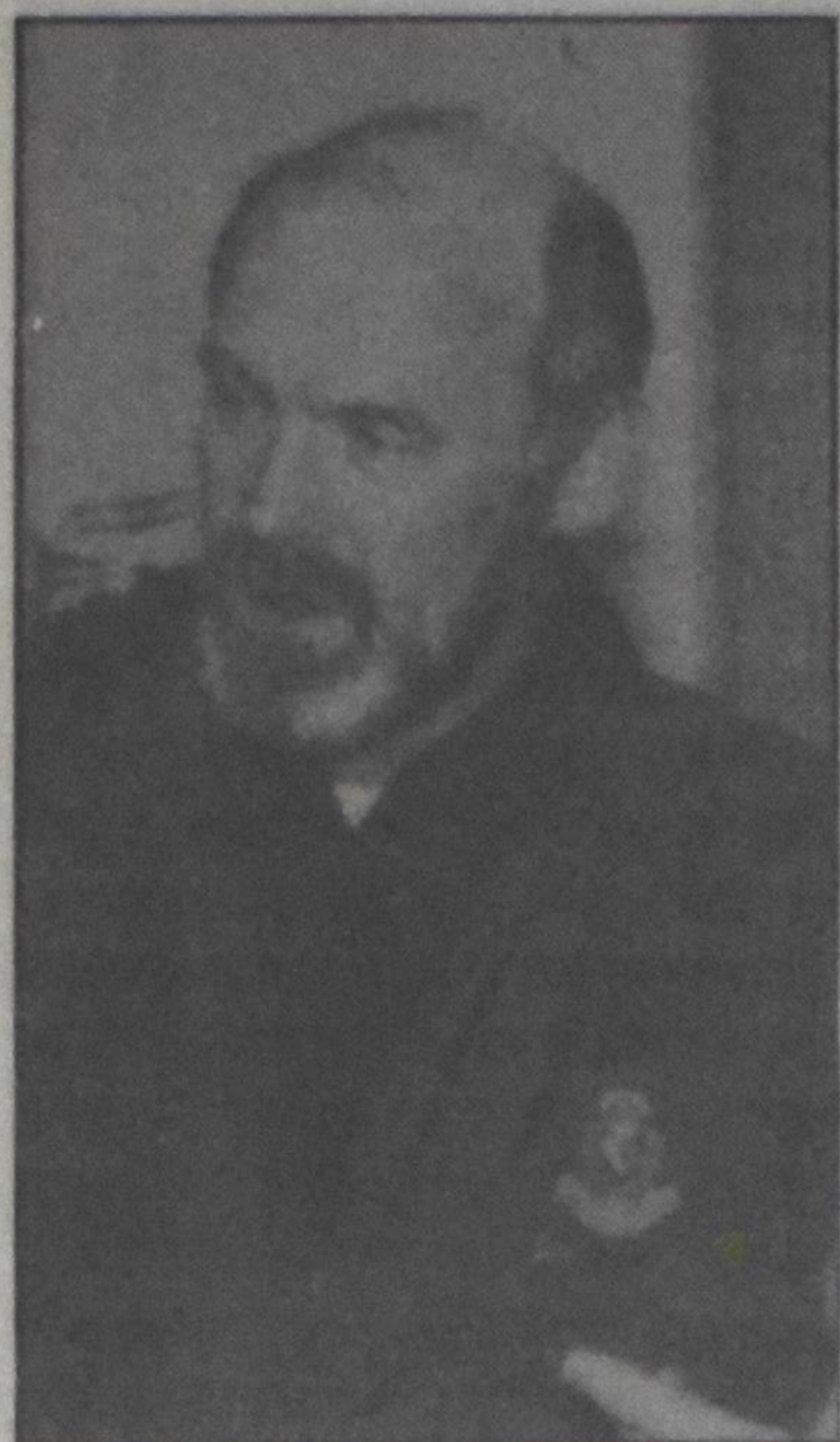


Photo: C.C. Files
Reinder J. Klein

Robert VanderVennen
TORONTO — The Huron District Christian Secondary School Society, unable to decide whether to start a Christian high school in the Clinton (Ontario) region took the bold and far-sighted step of asking the advice of a professional consultant. The advice of Educom Consulting, headed by Reinder Klein, was quite pointed: "It would not be wise for the Society to proceed with the establishment of a high school *at this time*."
The services of Educom Consulting were retained "for the purpose of gathering, analyzing and interpreting all the information necessary to determine whether or not the Christian Reformed

community in Huron County of southwestern Ontario was prepared to lend sufficient support for the successful establishment of a Christian high school in the neighbourhood of Clinton."
Klein used four methods simultaneously to find out whether support for a Christian high school was there. He distributed 1100 questionnaires, sent letters to 150 randomly selected families asking for more detailed information, he personally interviewed nearly 60 persons, and at the end held a meeting with about 20 people to discuss the issue.

Clear vision needed

The recommendation to postpone starting a school came from Klein's feeling that community Christian school leaders did not have a clear vision of what a Christian high school should be, and how such a vision might be concretely embodied. He recommended that the School Society should "initiate, at the earliest possible time, a concerted public effort to re-establish a clear understanding of the essence and general purpose of biblically based, Christ-centred day education" and "broaden its present scope of responsibilities to include the active investigation and enthusiastic promotion of imaginative, Reformed approaches to education."

The community was advised to take concrete steps to increase the level of co-operation among the several existing Christian elementary schools dotted throughout the far-flung and somewhat sparsely-settled district. Also recommended was having periodic workshops on Christian education in each of the local Christian Reformed churches, to build interest and insight.

The statistical results of the study are revealing. Of the 37 per cent of those who responded to the confidential letter, 25 per cent said they would intend to enrol their children in a Christian high school if one were started, but 50 per cent said they would not.

Only 18 per cent of the questionnaires were returned, which does not suggest a strong interest in considering a Christian high school. The general picture is that the people are strongly committed to Christian schools, and feel that having elementary schools is not enough, but that they back off from committing themselves to a new Christian high school. In personal interviews Klein found a degree of residual interpersonal conflict which could have a negative effect. He also found some ambivalence — both admiration and suspicion — toward intellectual endeavours.

From his own extensive

experience teaching in Christian high schools in different provinces, and with his own gift of precise articulation, Klein was disappointed that the people of Huron County could not very well put into words what they wanted in a Christian high school. He felt that in the public meeting one of the people put the finger right on the problem by saying, "I think you should tell the School Society that we here need to learn more about this business of Christian education first."

Klein added in his final remarks in his report: "There has to be a clear aim, a realistic expectation, a clear notion of what the product is to be. Without that, drift will corrupt the course and rot undermine quality. One certain result will be dissension among those engaged in the process."

Among his positive recommendations Klein suggested that the School Society anticipate the needs of students in rural communities and study the feasibility of "making the Huron district a centre for comprehensive Christian education geared specifically to the needs and ambitions of those who value and cherish life away from the urban centres."

The Huron School Society evidently received good service from Educom Consulting for its feasibility study — it hired the consultant on February 28 and received its report in April.

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Sudanese peace unlikely amid new religious conflicts

SUDAN (WEIS) — The effort to bring peace to Sudan, the north African nation that has seen civil war in one form or another for the last 30 years, has again been stalled in the wake of demands from influential Muslim officials who say they will not join a new provisional government unless Sharia or Islamic law is implemented to govern all the nation's peoples.

News Network International reports that although standing Sudanese officials have offered to submit to a new government in the interest of nationwide peace, the demands by the

Muslim leaders complicate the process for peace.

John Weed, a Presbyterian missionary with several years of experience working with Muslims throughout Africa, said that while the Sharia ordinances are imposed differently in each country, the punishment for violations of the law are usually severe.

Weed added that, during the last six years, Christians and other non-Muslims have been punished under Islamic law, which includes such measures as cutting off an arm in the case of a theft, or other body parts that may have been symbolic or

instrumental in the commission of a violation of the law.

Saying the law also intrudes into every aspect of life, Weed implied the threat is great to Christians trying to minister in a country where the laws are counter to many Christian teachings and also so severe in their punishment.

Meanwhile, following nine months of negotiations between the Sudanese Government and the rebel Sudanese Liberation Army, international relief efforts to people in the southern sections of the country have resumed.

Christian message broadcast again in Nicaragua

MANAGUA (WEIS) — The radio program "Iglesia," produced by the Roman Catholic Church, is again on the air in Managua, Nicaragua, one month after President Daniel Ortega agreed to allow Catholic stations to operate as part of an opposition press.

The broadcasts will be allowed as part of a compromise reached between Ortega and the presidents of

Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala and Costa Rica as a means to demobilizing the Contra rebels. As part of that compromise, elections in Nicaragua are scheduled for early next year.

Steven Wood, a development director with the Catholic Maryknoll Order which maintains a small contingent of workers in Nicaragua, said the Ortega

government has been inconsistent in its dealings with Catholic radio in the past, based on the political whims of Ortega at any given moment.

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HIELEMA-BLYLEVEN: We, the parents, Jack and Dorothy Hielema and Len and Diny Blyleven are happy to announce the marriage of our children VALERIE JOY to WILLIAM HARRY The wedding will take place, D.V., on Saturday, July 15, 1989, at 2:30 p.m. in Ebenezer Chr. Ref. Church of Jarvis, Ont. Rev. N. Cornelisse officiating. Future address: R.R.#2, Norval, ON N0P 1K0. TABAK-LUYMES: Thankful to the Lord who has brought them together, we, Martin and Geraldine Tabak of Edmonton, Alta., and Herman and Janny Luymes of Lacombe, Alta., announce the forthcoming marriage of our children LINDA MAE and ANDREW JACOB The marriage will take place, the Lord willing, on Friday, July 21, 1989, at 1 p.m. in Woodynook Chr. Ref. Church, Lacombe, Alta. Rev. C. VanNiejenhuis officiating. Future address: R.R.#5, Lacombe, AB T0C 1S0.	1964 July 10 1989 With joyful thanksgiving to God, we hope to celebrate the 25th wedding anniversary of our parents HERMAN and PAT DROST May God continue to bless you richly in your life together. With love: Betty & John Rob & Carolyn Dave & Deb Stephen Donna Carol Home address: R.R.#4, 1487 Ottawa St., South, Kitchener, ON N2G 3W7. Obituaries On Sunday morning, June 11, 1989, the Lord took home peacefully in her sleep to be with him forever our dearly beloved mother, grand- and great-grandmother ELLIE MEKKES (nee Hoogstra) at the age of 81 years. She is now reunited with Dad whom she missed so much since Mar. 9, 1985. She was a dear mother to us all and we miss her. Her children: Jannie & Art Van Dolder — St. Thomas, Ont. Jean & Ray Kielstra — St. Thomas, Ont. Lina & Sieger Kloostra — Chatham, Ont. Tiny & Ralph Smids — Chatham, Ont. John & Ina Hoogstra — Strathroy, Ont. Annie & Thys Piening — Brampton, Ont. Richard & Mieke Hoogstra — St. Thomas, Ont. Ellie & Allen Kuipers — Brampton, Ont. Klaas & Faye Hoogstra — St. Thomas, Ont. 40 grandchildren and 41 great-grandchildren. The funeral service was held on June 13, 1989, Rev. Peter Meyer of Orillia officiating. Correspondence address: J. Van Dolder, R.R.#4, St. Thomas, ON N5P 3S8. "But Jesus called the children to him and said, 'let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the Kingdom of God.'" (Luke 18:16) We, Peter and Kathy Krait, thank God for entrusting to our care but for a short while, the precious gift of our fifth child, a son RYAN PETER He was born Mar. 27, 1989, and received the sacrament of baptism Apr. 30, 1989. On June 24, 1989, the Lord in his infinite wisdom and mercy took home his covenant child to live with him forever. We do not always understand God's ways, but we pray that he will continue to give us strength in the days ahead. Sadly missed by Gregory, Michael, Joanna and Laura. Correspondence address: 22 Robinson St. S., Grimsby, ON L3M 3C4 Vacations Lakewood Christian Campgrounds R.R. #5, Forest, ON N0N 1J0 Phone (519) 899-4415 or (519) 845-3405 Lakewood consists of 125 acres of land, ponds, wooded trails, a creek, family camping and group camping area. Large pool facilities. Long nature and hiking trails.	Safe in the arms of Jesus, Safe in his tender care, There Nate will live for ever No more pain to bear. On June 22, 1989, at the age of three years NATHAN JAMES PLUGERS was quietly and tenderly taken into Jesus' arms to his heavenly home. Dearly loved son of: Ken & Tamara Plugers Twin brother of: Jordan (Nathan's best friend) and brother of: Taryn, who gave him much joy. Much loved grandson of: Cor & Mien Plugers — Jordan Station, Ont. Hank & Audrey Boer — Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. Loving great-grandson of: Wilhelmina Vahrmeyer — St. Catharines, Ont. Niesina Boer — Simcoe, Ont. John & Sara Duthler — Sauble Beach, Ont. Nathan will also be missed by many aunts and uncles and cousins. Correspondence address: Box 164, Jordan Station, ON L0R 1S0. "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is my portion forever" (Ps. 73:26). After a short illness, the Lord called to glory our mother, grandmother and great-grandmother JANNA SCHOLMAN (nee Kruimelaar) on Thursday, June 15, 1989, at the age of 80. In our sadness, we also rejoice that she now walks in heaven with those who have gone before; her husband Jan, daughter Jannie, and sons John and Bill. She will always be lovingly remembered by her family: Jane & Harry Struyk Bernard & Janet Scholman Jennie & Bill Eikelenboom Mannes & Harmina Scholman Andy & Janet Elgersma Tom & Nellie Scholman Joe & Audrey Scholman Henk & Nelly Scholman John & Lidy Scholman and 36 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral service was held at Providence CRC, Beamsville, Ont. Interment in Maple Lawn Cemetery, Wainfleet, Ont. Correspondence address: B. Scholman, 12 Bendamere Dr., Grimsby, ON L3M 2N3. Help Wanted Interested in youth work? Are you enthusiastic and really care for kids? Then consider an opportunity for service in a Christ-centred residential program for children with emotional and behavioural problems. Live-in child care worker positions commence in September. Apply to: Mutual Support Systems R.R. #1, Perry Rd. Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0 (416) 899-2311 Help wanted on dairy farm near Drayton, starting August or September. Call (519) 638-2271. Dutch-speaking senior as companion for elderly disabled woman in Bracebridge, Muskoka, Ont. Live-in plus salary. Write to: File #2523, c/o Calvinist Contact, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.	1978 Niagara-on-the-Lake 1989 "Children of the heavenly Father Safely in his bosom gather; Nestling bird nor star in heaven Such a refuge e'er was given. Neither life nor death shall ever From the Lord his children sever; For to them his grace revealing, He turns sorrow into healing." SAMANTHA ELLEN ZWART found her refuge with the Lord on Thursday, June 22, 1989. She is lovingly remembered by her grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. We grieve Samantha's death with her family: Henk and Ellen, Rachel, Karen and Joel. We are reassured by the life eternal which she now has. Klaas & Jitske Knoops — Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. Susan & John Kok — Sioux Center, Iowa Vanessa, Jennifer, André, Sarah, Emily, Abigail Doro & Arend Bakker — Orangeville, Ont. Julian, Elena, Colin, Catherine Judy & Lee Hardy — Grand Rapids, Mich. Katrina, Andrew, Ian Wendy & Paul Saunders — Wainfleet, Ont. David, Rebecca, Rosanna, Tobin Irene Payne — Toronto, Ont. Predeceased by cousin Peter Klaas Kok Sam touched us all. She played, she shared, she laughed, she loved. We miss her. Correspondence address: P.O. Box 372, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0. Summer Job Market ST. CATHARINES, Ont.: 18-year-old student needs summer job. Has experience in landscaping. Has driver's licence and can also operate a tractor. Willing to learn anything available. Preferably warehouse or store. Please call (416) 935-1020 and ask for Mark Accommodations Young man, sponsored by the Dutch "Jongeren Programma," is looking for room and board in the Cayuga or Hamilton area for one year, starting September 1989. For more information call: T. Van Reenen at (416) 772-3644 after 4 p.m. Shared apartment available in Toronto. Good location, close to University of Toronto. Female student, over 21, preferred. Available July 1, 1989. Call Helen at (416) 921-7929. Real Estate <div>Moving to or from Thunder Bay? Call Don Ten Have (807) 577-4810 Representing Midwest Realty Limited (807) 623-7404</div> Employment wanted HERDSMAN AVAILABLE: Experience: 30 yrs. in cattle, 12 yrs. in Herefords, AI, show and sale, comp., mechanical, welding. Contact J & F Vander Wekken, Clive, AB T0C 0Y0. Phone (403) 784-3670.
Thank you	Anniversaries			
BUMA: With gratitude to God we want to thank our children, grandchildren, relatives and friends for sharing our 50th wedding anniversary with us. Special thanks to our children and grandchildren for making this such a wonderful occasion. Donald and Irene Buma, 153 Kneider Ave., Dunnville, ON N1A 1A6.	1963 July 29 1989 With praise and thanksgiving to God, we are happy to announce the 25th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents PETER and JANNY BREEDVELD (nee Slopsema-Zwart) We thank the Lord for giving them 25 years together and pray that he will continue to keep them in his care. With love: John & Nanda Zwart — Drayton, Ont. Janelle, ? Margaret & Irving Bos — Burlington, Ont. Jillian, Wesley Arnold & Sharon Zwart — Calgary, Alta. Stephen, Melinda Peter Breedveld Jr. — Edmonton, Alta. Edward Breedveld — Stoney Plain, Alta. To celebrate this occasion, an open house will be held at Ottewell Chr. Ref. Church on Saturday, July 29, 1989, from 2-5 p.m. Home address: 9224 Ottewell Rd., Edmonton, AB T6B 2C7. Thanks be to God, who has blessed our parents ANN and WILLIAM BUS with 45 years of marriage. We hope to celebrate this joyous day with them on Aug. 2, 1989, D.V. May the Lord continue to be your source of strength and may his light shine through you. With love: Pia & Jake — Fernie, B.C. Esther, Patrick, Ingrid Corrie & John — Surrey, B.C. Eric, Joel, Nathan Bill — Thunder Bay, Ont. Home address: 20181 Grade Cres., Langley, B.C.			
Births				
VAN HOLST: We, Jerry and Marlene, thank God for the safe arrival of our second son TYLER JACOB born May 30, 1989, weighing 9 lbs. 10½ oz. He is welcomed by his brother Michael, grandparents Mr. and Mrs. J. VanderMeulen of Stirling, Ont., and Mr. and Mrs. G. VanHolst of Hamilton, Ont., aunts, uncles and cousins. Home address: 5 Huffman Rd., Box 798, Frankford, ON K0K 2C0.				
VISSCHER: With joy and thanks to God, Albert and Theresa announce the arrival of a healthy daughter MELANIE ALISSA born June 5, 1989. A little sister for Angela. Proud grandparents are Mrs. A. Visscher of Staffa and Mr. and Mrs. G. Douma of Athens. Home address: R.R.#2, Staffa, ON N0K 1Y0.				
YOUR ad would look great in this space!				

Classified

For Rent	Teachers	Teachers	Help Wanted	Help Wanted
<p>House for rent: four-bedroom, two-year-old back-split. Asking \$1,200 per month including utilities. No pets. First and last months' rent required. Available Aug. 1 to Mar. 15. Both rent and available dates negotiable. Bowmanville area. Phone (416) 434-5871.</p> <p>Basement apartment for rent for a single adult. In walking distance of Mohawk and Sennel College and 10-minute drive from Redeemer College. Available July 16. Call (416) 385-6938.</p>	<p>SMITHERS, B.C.: The Christian School Society of Smithers and Telkwa of Smithers B.C. has an opening in elementary and secondary French, upper elementary language arts and primary Grades 2 or 3, and a possible opening in elementary and secondary phys-ed. Ours is a two-campus school system. Please contact: Glen Ewald at Box 2117, Smithers, BC V0J 2N0. Phone school (604) 847-9833, res. (604) 847-2186.</p>	<p>TORONTO, Ont.: Toronto Central Christian School invites applications for a teaching position in the junior class (multi-Grades 3, 4, and 5). Experience, interest in an integrated curriculum approach and some French skills would be an asset. Please call G. Dekker at the school (416) 968-2036 or home (416) 466-6304 or send resume to: Toronto Central Christian School, 55 Salisbury Ave., Toronto, ON M4X 1C5.</p>	<p>Administrative assistant required</p> <p>Redeemer College seeks to employ a person primarily to manage the day-to-day activities of the Pascal Centre for Advanced Studies in Faith and Science. The successful candidate will be a self-starter, preferably with a university degree, who can work independently and effectively. Word processing skills, and some knowledge of German, French, Dutch and/or Latin will be a definite asset. For more information contact the Director of the Pascal Centre, Dr. J. van der Meer.</p> <p>Please submit your application and resume to: Personnel Director, Redeemer College, Ancaster, ON L9G 3N6</p>	

Vacations

LANG'S RESORT
Cottages and campgrounds
RICE LAKE

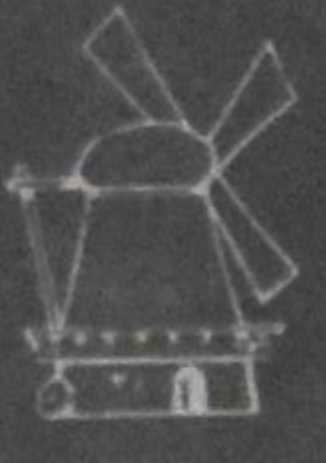
Like fishing the big ones? Fully-equipped large (newly-renovated) housekeeping cottages — colour TV, sandy bathing area, rec. hall, new boats and motors, store, live bait, fishing lic., campsites available for weekend, week, or season. Like a clean quiet resort. It's all here at the family place. Before you book your '89 vacation, take a drive and see our new look. Only 83 miles from Toronto. Write or phone for brochure:

Lang's Resort
R.R. #3, Box C, Roseneath, ON K0K 2X0
Phone: (416) 352-2308

RICE LAKE

Quiet family resort, lake-front housekeeping cottages, boats, motors, swimming, good fishing. Weekends and weekly, reasonable rates, brochure available. Vacancies starting August 12 to Labour Day weekend. Willowood Camp, R.R.#3, Box 1, Roseneath, ON K0K 2X0, or phone (416) 352-2821.

For Sale



It's Mostly in Dutch
some English, too

It's almost all about The Netherlands - current affairs, feature stories, news from the churches (1 page), politics, many pictures - and the Dutch in Canada and the U.S.A. It's being mailed twice a month and has 28 tabloid pages or more.

Only \$17.00 annually.

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From the U.S.A.:
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the Windmill Herald

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Also, in English,
The Bible and Islam
\$4.95 Canada / \$3.95 U.S.
and a folder of essays on Understanding the Middle East (\$1.00).

Write:
The Back to God Hour
P.O. Box 5070
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8

Pacific Christian School

Pacific Christian School (elementary) is accepting applications for a **Grade 6** teacher, interested in physical education for the 1989/90 school year.

If interested send resume including relevant documentation to:

Karen Vos, Principal
671 Agnes St., Victoria, BC V8Z 2E7
Phone (604) 479-9365

Help Wanted	Help Wanted
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Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools
invites applications for a
Part-time Secretary

Familiarity with word processing and general office procedures is required. This opening will appeal to those interested in working three days a week commencing in **September, 1989.**

Enjoy the flexibility and atmosphere of a small office and the opportunity to work in a Christian environment.

Please send a letter of application and resume by July 15, 1989, to:

Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools
P.O. Box 7220, Ancaster, ON L9G 3L4

Motor Vehicle Mechanic
Immediate opening

A growing three-bay garage has an immediate opening for a licensed Class A mechanic. We are seeking a highly-motivated individual capable of working under minimal supervision. We offer a competitive wage and up-to-date equipment.

Please contact:
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c/o Steve's Automotive Ltd.
P.O. Box 34, Woodstock, ON N4S 7W5
Phone (519) 537-5402 (business) or (519) 537-6410 (home)

WANTED
Commissioned Sales Personnel

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Our company has a display at four national trade shows, to back up our sales force.

If interested in joining an aggressive company, please send résumé to:

Meyer Imports Ltd.
53 Northfield Dr., Waterloo, ON N2L 4E6
Attn. Mr. John Meyer, Sales Manager

Calvinist Contact

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Yes, your parents have subscribed to *Calvinist Contact* for many years. But if you still think of C.C. as an immigrant tabloid with long obituaries, you have missed out on a lot of exciting reading of late.

Calvinist Contact is unique in that it appears weekly, is independent and looks at news and issues in a fresh and biblically sensitive way.

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We will send four complimentary issues to you. Complete the coupon below and mail it to:

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St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

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☐ I enclose \$16.50 for a six-month trial subscription.

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City/Town _____ Code _____

Safety rules for children when swimming

1. If possible, have a swimming BUDDY, but never swim alone.
2. Don't swim until two hours AFTER A MEAL.
3. Don't swim in an UNSUPERVISED AREA.
4. Don't dive into UNKNOWN WATER.
5. Never swim AFTER DARK.
6. If you swim LONG DISTANCE, follow the shoreline and be accompanied by a boat.
7. If you're a non-swimmer, wear a SAFETY VEST when you're in the water. Don't rely on water toys to keep you afloat.

Note for parents: Make sure your children are SUPERVISED at all times. Children have drowned in the time it takes to get a drink or answer a telephone call.

Information supplied to *Calvinist Contact* by Marilyn Zwarych, Red Cross official in St. Catharines, Ont.

Events/News

Presbyterian scholar will address women in ministry

TORONTO (OTS) — A leadership conference for women in ministry, featuring Dr. Roberta Hestenes, will occur Nov. 3-5, 1989, at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church in Toronto, Ontario, Theological Seminary and McMaster Divinity College have announced. Hestenes will address the topic, "New Patterns for Christian Women in Leadership."

The purpose of the conference is "to provide an opportunity for women to develop their personal, spiritual and intellectual understanding of new models for themselves in ministry," says the seminary. It is designed for women clergy, theological students, leaders in church and Christian organizations and lay women who see their task as ministry.

Roberta Hestenes is president of Eastern College, a Christian liberal arts college in St. Davids, Pennsylvania. Dr. Hestenes holds a BA from the University of California at Santa Barbara, has taken

graduate studies in speech at the University of Washington, and has her M.Div. and D. Min. degrees from Fuller Theological Seminary. A Presbyterian Church minister, she is a leader in the area of spiritual formation and a popular plenary speaker for conferences. Her latest book is *The Ministry of Women in a Changing Church*.

The conference will also feature workshops on such topics as leadership today, the nature of a "call," authority, dealing with anger, sexuality and pain, etc.

More information can be obtained from BUILT, 219 St. George St., Toronto, ON M5R 2M2; (416) 922-6565.

ATTENTION!

When you fax your display or classified ads to us (particularly obituaries), please type them and check spelling BEFORE you transmit the text. Thank you.

Weekly Puzzle

by Donald B. Groat

ACROSS

1 Chunk

5 Cupid

9 Zee's cousin

14 1st. dance

15 Repetition

16 Smelly

17 Maple genus

18 Receipts

19 Large: pref.

20 Begin Thomas a Kempis quote

23 Spartacus e.g.

24 — of a kind

25 Organic compound

32 — Ste. Marie

35 Tavern quaffs

36 Disencumber

37 Uninhibited activity

38 Barents e.g.

39 Hoisting boom

41 Pablo's aunt

42 Smell —

43 Ms Reddy

44 Art of persuasion

48 Chin. name

49 Copycats

52 Continue quote

58 Scot. town

59 Family circle member

60 Cougar

61 Tidal flood

62 Go out with

63 Unauthorized info

64 Revoke in law

65 Arthurian lady

66 Noun suffix

DOWN

1 Artie or George

2 Lomond and Ness

3 Spinning

4 Nautical hanger-on

5 One who never agrees

6 Castle adjunct

7 Bismarck

8 Coral ridge

9 Conclude quote

10 Exiguous

11 Impress distinctly

12 Encircled

13 Trouble

21 Egg-shaped

22 Some beans

26 Iraqi port

27 NY city

28 Track events

29 Siberian sea

30 Prong

31 First domicile

32 Concordes

33 Upolu's city

34 Soviet river

39 Makes a bet

40 Settle anew

42 In a frenzy

45 Political floor

46 Indian chief

47 Stopped

50 Fr. cathedral city

51 Yma of music

52 Campus area

53 Impulse

54 Stow

55 Kubial Khan dynasty

56 One opposed

57 Usurp

58 Actress Arthur

Calendar of Events

July 8-9	25th anniversary of Maranatha CRC, Bowmanville, Ont. July 8: Social at 7:30 p.m. in Knox Chr. School. July 9: Special worship service at 10 a.m. For info. call (416) 623-8567 or 987-4995.	Sept. 22-24	25th anniversary of Trinity Christian School, Burlington, Ont. Sept. 22: Reception and banquet starting at 6 p.m. in the Royal Botanical Gardens Banquet Hall. Speaker: Mel Elzinga. Sept. 23: Open house at the school from 12-4 p.m. Sept. 24: Special church service at 3 p.m. in Park Ave. Church led by Pastor Jerry Hoytema. For info. call (416) 336-5619.
July 9-14	1989 Annual Conference of The Hymn Society of America at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich. , including a three-day workshop (July 12-14) in hymn playing and improvisation taught by John Ferguson and others. For info. call (817) 921-7608.	Sept. 23	Coffee Break & Story Hour Inspirational Rally 1989 at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. To register contact: Olga Anjema, R.R.#2, Wyoming, ON N0N 1T0 or phone (519) 786-5557.
July 30	Dutch service at 3 p.m. led by Rev. P.W. De Bruyne at the CRC, Ancaster, Ont.	Sept. 30	"Building a Better Workplace," a CLAC-sponsored conference from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Keynote speaker: Dr. John Redekop. Workshops led by Mark Larratt-Smith, Neil Roos and Ed Vanderkloet. To register call (416) 670-7383.
Aug. 4-7	31st ICS Niagara Family Conference, Fort Erie, Ont. Keynote speaker Dr. Harry Fernhout on: "Educating Disciples: Shaping Memory and Vision." For info. call (416) 979-2331.	Oct. 11	Fall rally of the Ottawa region CRC Ladies League commemorating 35th anniversary. Location: Athens, Ont. For info. contact Mrs. Isabel Wouda, Box 359, Cobden, ON K0J 1K0.
Aug. 12-13	50th Anniversary of the CRC, Houston, B.C. Plan now to attend. For info. write to Anniversary Committee, Box 6, Houston, BC V0J 1Z0.	Oct. 20-21	25th anniversary celebrations of London District Christian Secondary School, London, Ont. For info. contact Henk Vandezande at (519) 455-4360.
Aug. 17	Senior Citizens' Day at Lakewood Christian Campgrounds, Forest, Ont. Speaker, special music and grandparents' mini-olympics. Bring own lunch!	Oct. 21	1989 All-Ontario Holy Spirit Conference at Kennedy Rd. Tabernacle, Brampton, Ont. For info. about registration contact Christian Communications Centre at (416) 890-3222.
Aug. 19	Second "Dryberse Dag" at 10 a.m. at Pinehurst Conservation Park, Paris, Ont. For info. call M. Booy (519) 269-3718 or B. Smit (416) 957-7617.	Nov. 3-4	25th anniversary of the Christian School, Agassiz, B.C. Former teachers, alumni and friends are invited. For info. contact Mrs. B. VanderVeen, Box 858, Agassiz, BC V0M 1A0 (604) 796-2848.
Aug. 23	Organ recital by John Wm. Vandertuin at 8 p.m. at Oratoire St Joseph, Montreal, Que.	Nov. 9	CFFO Provincial Board meeting from 10 - 4 p.m. in the CRC, Georgetown, Ont. For info. call (519) 837-1620 (a.m.) or (519) 338-3214 (p.m.)
Sept. 3	Dutch service at 3 p.m. led by Rev. J. Kuntz at the CRC, Ancaster, Ont.		
Sept. 14	CFFO Prov. Board meeting from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. in the CRC, Georgetown, Ont. For info. call (519) 837-1620 or 338-3214 (p.m. only).		
Sept. 16	32nd annual convention of the Ontario CRC School Association. Theme: "Let's get enthusiastic for the Lord." From 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at Providence CRC, Beamsville, Ont.		
Sept. 22-23	All-Ontario CCM-CRC Conference at the Maranatha CRC, Woodstock, Ont. Speakers: Nelson Kloosterman, Robert Godfrey and Thomas Vanden Heuvel. Watch for announcements.		

Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Called

— to a team ministry at Seymour, Grand Rapids, Mich., Rev. Charles Cornelisse of Westside Fellowship, Kingston, Ont.

— to Wallaceburg, Ont., Rev. Cornelius Persenaire of Fellowship, Brighton, Ont.

— to Drayton, Ont., Rev. David Tigchelaar, formerly of First, Calgary, Alta.

— as youth pastor at Rehoboth, Bowmanville, Ont., Cand. Michael Abma.

— to Covenant, Calgary, Alta., Cand. Bert Amsing.

— to Covenant, Barrie, Ont., Rev. H. Aubrey Van Hoff of Abbotsford, B.C.

— to Clinton, Ont., Rev. Richard Stienstra of Dundas, Ont.

Accepted

— to Everson, Wash., Rev. Peter De Vries of Bloomfield, Ont.

— to Vanastra, Ont., Cand. Philip Weaver.

Declined

— to Telkwa, B.C., Rev. Johan Tangelder of East, Strathroy, Ont.

Name change

— the merged congregation which is made up of what were the Rehoboth and Fellowship in Toronto has been named Rehoboth Fellowship Christian Reformed Church.

Address change

— Rev. Jake Kuipers, 907 Varsity Crescent, Sarnia, ON N7S 4W2; home telephone (519) 542-4466; study: 336-8808.

Why not place your event here?!

To all Calvinist Contact subscribers and advertisers:

Only FIVE issues will be published during July and August:

July 7, July 14, July 28, Aug. 18 and Aug. 25.

The Calvinist Contact office will be closed for vacation from July 24 through August 7. Our office will re-open Tuesday, August 8.

ADVERTISING DEADLINES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Issue dated:

July 14

July 28

August 18

August 25

Advertising deadline (4 p.m.)

July 5

July 12 (NOTE!)

August 9

August 16

Calvinist Contact will not publish: July 21, August 4 and August 11.

Your co-operation is appreciated. We wish you all a relaxing holiday.

Stan de Jong
Manager

Books

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Political theory

Sacred and profane in politics

***Twin Powers: Politics and the Sacred*, by Thomas Molnar. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. Paperback, 143 pp., \$12.95. Reviewed by David T. Koyzis, assistant professor of political science, Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.**

Reformed Christians have frequently noted the weak sense of the antithesis which allows some Christians to strike a rather too easy alliance with whatever in the classical Greek tradition seems most compatible with their understanding of the divine revelation. But Christian Platonists or Aristotelians do not ignore the antithesis; they simply see it running along different lines. Thomas Molnar certainly recognizes its existence, but for him it separates, not Christian from non-Christian, but ancient from modern. Because both Christianity and the old pagan religions share a common sense of the sacred, they are at one in their opposition to modern secularism, which has lost sight of the sacred altogether.

Although Molnar is a Roman Catholic philosopher,

his thinking seems more influenced by the Byzantine Eastern tradition than by the Western tradition of Christianity. This is evident from his discussion of several themes which are typically found in Eastern Orthodox thought: the stress on the significance of the Incarnation for bringing the sacred into contact with the profane; the notion of divinization, that is, on humanity becoming God; the favourable estimation of Byzantine "caesaropapism" and its consequent blurring of church-state boundaries; the notion of the human community as a "replica" of the divine order; and, finally, his deep appreciation of Plato and the persistent pre-Christian influences which have survived in Western civilization.

Working out of this perspective, Molnar argues that throughout human history political power has been seen as mediating between the forces of the cosmos and the profane world of everyday existence. The public rituals and ceremonies traditionally attached to the ruler and his actions have been nearly universal and speak to the perennial human need to infuse the profane world of human affairs with sacred meaning. This sacralty of power confers on its possessor the very legitimacy which is needed to maintain the integrity of the human community against the constant threat of anarchy.

Science has 'desacralized' power

In the modern era, however, power has been radically desacralized by a scientific

worldview which has stripped the cosmos of all mystery and has reduced it to a complex of physical forces. Ironically, argues Molnar, Christianity has played a part in this process because it has emptied the universe of "gods, spirits and demons" and left it to relate directly to the one God. Although the modern mechanistic worldview has proved to be a poor substitute for the sacred, the author sees a small glimmer of hope in the inevitable tendency of the soul to reach out for the divine.

Molnar's most valuable insights are to be found in the fourth and fifth chapters, in which he perceptively points out the destructive features of a political community which has cut itself off from any reality beyond itself. The prevailing cosmology of matter in motion is reflected in a society built on conflict — whether this be the conflict among individuals so characteristic of liberal society or the class conflict of a socialist order. In effect, the common good so valued by the ancients has been fragmented into "individual rights, interests, and preferences," which offer an exceedingly weak basis for community.

For all the genuine wisdom in this book, I do not find the way Molnar articulates the modern dilemma very helpful. The categories of sacred and profane are especially problematic. As I see it, the central problem is not so much that the state has lost touch with a supposedly separate sacred order, but that our contemporary political communities have claimed absolute sovereignty and have thereby refused to recognize any creational norms — particularly justice — which hold for political practice itself. More fundamentally, I am skeptical of an approach which minimizes the gulf between Christianity and ancient polytheistic religions in the interest of combatting "modernity."



Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

A small mind

"... In all his thoughts there is no room for God." (Ps. 10:4)

Frank Fowler tells this amazing story: during World War II, 1,500 international noncombatant prisoners of war were held by the Japanese in a prison camp. Three hundred were Americans, 1,200 were of other Allied nationalities. The American Red Cross sent 2,100 "care packages" to the camp, each with some necessities and some conveniences.

The Japanese decided that since these came from America, each American should get three packages, and all of the non-Americans would get one package a piece. But the Americans protested; as a group they demanded that they each get seven Red Cross packages, and their non-American allies none!

Self-centred

Self-centredness dies slowly in the human heart. We are born frail and helpless, but spend our years asserting our importance. Boxing champ Muhammad Ali was especially self-aggrandizing and became famous for his perpetual boast: "I'm the greatest!" Trying to encourage a little humility, a colleague once asked him what he was like at golf. "I'm the best," replied Ali. "I just haven't played yet!"

When the French philosopher Auguste Comte was about to die, he murmured to those at his bedside, "What an irreparable loss!" As Nero, the mad emperor of Rome, prepared to commit suicide, he wept for himself, crying, "How great an artist dies here!" And the German philosopher Hegel took this parting shot: "Only one man ever understood me And he didn't understand me!"

Bitterness

Humility is part of the Christian gospel. We aren't the best. We can't make it on our own. We have no boast in ourselves. And sometimes that can engender a bit of bitterness toward those around us who seem rather self-accomplished and self-fulfilled. Asaph spoke that way in Psalm 73. "I decided at one point to stop training my children in the ways of the Lord," might be a paraphrase of what he says in verse 15, "since godliness kept them from enjoying life!" And David seems to feel somewhat that same way here in Psalm 10: "Why do you let others get away with so much, God?"

It's a bit like the sentiments of Simon Darcourt in Robertson Davies' recent novel, *The Lyre of Orpheus*. He's a priest by training and vocation, working now as a university professor. He knows he should be more devout and humble and loving, but there's too much to enjoy in the world around him. He even pulls off an art theft at one point and muses what it might do to the eternal destiny of his soul. Finally he decides that his sins and deceit won't matter: "A deathbed repentance would probably square things with God. Meanwhile, this was Life."

Resolution

So where does David end up? Is he left a cranky old man, spitefully religious, spouting off doomsday sarcasm to the godless millionaires around him: "God's going to get you someday!"?

Not quite. Psalm 10 ends with his attention turned toward those who are used and abused in society. The helpless. The homeless. The manipulated. Sure, he's gotten ripped off a time or two. Sure, there were moments when he would have sold his soul to the devil if it would have gained him some of the cravings that whetted his appetite here. But when he sees others who are cast off by the system, he realizes how small the system is. It's big enough for lust, but not for love. It's grand enough for consuming, but not for communion. It's large enough for taking, but never tending.

In the end, David sees beyond the façade of a materialistic society, and longs for a bigger mind that sees God and a larger heart that cares about people. Some might think David is opting out of a dog-eat-dog world because he hasn't got what it takes to make it.

Maybe he hasn't. But should he? Is the mark of human accomplishment the ability to live without God?

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

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